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Contents

The Week 1

Editorials

Four-Wheel Brakes for Speculation 4
What Is Wrong with Our State Department? 5

General Articles

Mr. Hoover's Foreign Problems ..... Raymond Leslie Buell 7
Autumn Love (verse) ..... John Crowe Ransome 10
So This Is Farm-Relief Finance! ..... Gertrude Mathews Shelby 11
All God's Chillun Got Mentioned ..... Felix Ray 14
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 15
Splendid Squalor ..... Stark Young 16
Soviet Art and Handicrafts ..... Robert Littell 18

Correspondence 19

Reviews of Books

Nonsense ..... Edmund Wilson 21
Earth Pictures ..... Lawrence S. Morris 22
The Golden Cord ..... Florence Haxton 23
Oh, La-La! ..... T. S. Matthews 23
West-Running Brook ..... Theodore Spencer 24
Sociological Miscellany ..... E. C. Lindeman 24
He Saw It Himself ..... M. P. L. 26

The Week

SENATOR CAPPER'S plan for an embargo on shipments of munitions or other materials of war to any nation which may violate the Pact of Paris by engaging in aggressive war will, if it is adopted, constitute two long steps toward providing that document with practical meaning. As the New Republic has pointed out, the "outlawry of war" would have little significance if, when a nation had outlawed itself by engaging in war without submitting to the prescribed processes of arbitration or conciliation, we insisted on trading with the outlaw. Such an insistence might well have tragic results if, in pursuit of this absolute interpretation of our traditional doctrine of "freedom of the seas," we should use our navy to protect our ocean trade with the belligerent, though the British navy might be engaged as an instrument of international police to interrupt that trade. The first step to give meaning to the Pact is clearly, therefore, to renounce our *right* to trade with the outlaw. This we might do in a treaty with Great Britain, or with a group of nations, restating sea law and the rights of neutrals in the light of the Pact of Paris. The Capper resolution, however, renounces the right as a self-denying ordinance. It also takes the second step of declaring it unlawful for our nationals to trade with the outlaw at all. This means that we should actively prevent the trade, instead of waiting for some foreign navy to do so.

THE immediate result of the passage of the Capper resolution, and of the adoption of similar measures by other governments, would be to rob naval rivalry of most of its reason for existence. The British could not reasonably think they had to build to police our trade with a possible enemy, nor could we think we had to build to check the British policing efforts—unless one of these nations should by implication confess an intention to violate its treaty obligations by engaging in war as an "instrument of national policy." That, in our opinion, would be the chief value of the resolution as a safeguard to peace. To settle what we should do in a possible war is more important for its effect on present dangerous tendencies than because it would have much bearing on the outbreak of an imminent war. Anything that would bring disarmament nearer is the most practical step towards reducing international tension. Aside from this, emphasis needs to be placed, not so much upon how we should punish a belligerent as upon how the conflicts of interest or prejudice which might lead to hostilities are to be prevented or controlled. The world needs to organize for peace, not for war. While a governed world must substitute courts and police forces for the law of the feud, it must devote its major attention to building up those means of accommodation and those conditions of justice and good will which may make resort to courts and police as unlikely as possible.

IF THE newspaper correspondents are correct in assuming that Col. Henry L. Stimson is to be Secretary of State in the new Cabinet, Mr. Hoover has made an excellent choice, in view of the limited number of men who were both politically and personally available. Colonel Stimson is honorable,

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intelligent and industrious. In the Rooseveltian days he was a progressive, and while he has since grown increasingly conservative, his conservatism has been of a sort which even his adversaries can respect. His limited service as Governor-General of the Philippines has resulted in a remarkable improvement of feeling on the part of the native political leaders. In the Nicaraguan affair, while the New Republic believes the United States acted unwisely in assuming alone what might better have been made an international responsibility, Colonel Stimson played his part skillfully and without discredit to himself. In the past his sympathies have been with the militaristically-inclined, rather than the pacifists; but in this regard conditions are changing so rapidly that what anybody said or did ten or twenty years ago is of little importance today; Mr. Hoover will set his own pace in this matter, and Colonel Stimson is unlikely to seek to alter it. The country might be well satisfied with the new Cabinet if all its members proved to be of the same caliber.

THERE is no shrewder group of diplomats in the world than those of the Vatican, and for many years the question of the Catholic Church's temporal power has been one of their major preoccupations. It may be assumed, therefore, that the settlement with the Italian government has been the subject of the longest and most careful consideration, and that the bargain seems to the Vatican authorities a wise one from their own point of view. Some of the advantages, indeed, are obvious. The independent sovereignty of the Papacy is recognized by the government in exchange for the renunciation, by the Vatican, of every claim which would make that sovereignty of any material importance. Catholicism becomes the official state religion of Italy, and such portions of the canon law as are appropriate to secular affairs will be supported by the civil law. The legality of the religious ceremony of marriage will be recognized by the Italian government. The Church will receive an indemnity of two billion lire. The present situation in regard to religious teachings in the state schools will be confirmed, and its continuance guaranteed: all students will receive religious instruction unless their parents obtain a specific exemption for them.

AGAINST these advantages there are important facts to be set. The coldness of the Vatican to him has heretofore been Mussolini's chief stumbling block, and in recent years he has made every possible effort to be conciliatory. But now that the Church has come over to his side, his prestige and power will be greatly increased. The courtship is over, and the honeymoon may prove of brief duration; for in the long run there is not room in Italy for two authorities so complete as those which both the Church and the Dictator wish to exercise. There are some points in the program of Il Duce which the Vatican can hardly endorse; yet its power of protest has been curtailed by the new *rapprochement*. The relationship between the Church and other countries will also come under new embarrassment. What, for instance, will the Hoover administration, brought into office by an overwhelming anti-Catholic vote, do when confronted by the question of a Papal envoy at Washington? Again, though the Vatican does not at present desire a membership in the League of Nations, this question may arise in the future and could prove highly embarrassing. There are several countries now represented in the League whose official governmental attitude is strongly anti-clerical; how would they vote on the question of admission? And if the Vatican became a League member, would the present degree of coöperation between Washington and Geneva be decreased? It will be years, no doubt, before these and similar questions can be answered; but there is no doubt that they are serious ones.

OUR Washington correspondent, in this issue, discusses the progressives in the House and Senate, and draws some rather pessimistic conclusions as to the chances of their exerting a useful influence either in the present or the forthcoming session. While many of our readers would quarrel with him in his judgment on some individuals, we think they must concede that his picture of the group as a whole is not inaccurate. At the present time, a progressive in either party, and from almost any state in the Union, is an accident; he is a progressive by temperament, who is usually elected for other reasons. A member of the British Labor party who gets into the House of Commons has been, so to speak, brought up in the party discipline. Before being elected he has participated in party debates on all sorts of issues, and has arrived at that substantial unanimity of opinion which is achieved by every group of men working together. The American progressive is subjected to no such process, except to a very limited degree, through infrequent conferences of progressive Congressmen on specific issues, which take place after he has come to Washington. This accounts for the fact that the members of the group hold such widely varying opinions on questions about which you would expect them to agree.

THERE are, however, two facts which our Washington correspondent does not emphasize, which ought to be remembered. The first is the great power which even one progressive, especially in the Senate, can exercise through use of the device of investigation. The service which Senator Walsh of Montana performed, working at times virtually single-handed, in exposing the oil scandals, can hardly be over-estimated. Senator Wheeler was almost equally useful in revealing the facts about Daughertyism in the Department of Justice. The late Senator La Follette, with a variation of the same technique, conducted his own unofficial investigations, reported them to the Senate, and intro-

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duced bills to remedy the undesirable conditions he had exposed. The second point is that the progressives usually do better in a time of real crisis than their general conduct would lead one to expect. Like French soldiers, their discipline improves as the situation becomes more serious. The coming session of Congress will see the most brazen attempt in a generation to feed the forces of special privilege at the expense of the common man. There is as yet no reason for pessimism about the willingness and ability of the progressives to oppose that program.

ANYONE who wants to know with what great aggregation of holding-company control his local electric power company is affiliated may find out by consulting a paper-bound book just written by Gifford Pinchot of Pennsylvania, entitled "The Power Monopoly, Its Make-Up and Menace." This book contains an alphabetical list of electrical and power companies and their subsidiaries all over the United States, accompanied by key numbers showing where they head up. The book shows the progress of the centralization of control at the time of its writing, when forty-one companies controlled 82 percent of all electric power generated in the United States, and thirty-five of these companies were controlled by six major financial interests. Since the pamphlet was written, further mergers and concentration of control have proceeded with bewildering rapidity. Mr. Pinchot does not object to the existence of monopoly in itself, since monopoly has many social uses. But he objects to some of the important practices acompanying the formation of this monopoly, which have enabled it to bilk the consumer. The question of what may be done to control it is thus emphasized.

A RECENT despatch from Jerusalem to the New York Herald Tribune contains this sentence:

> Eighty-five Arab camel riders, believed to have been members of the raiding party of Mutair tribesmen of the Wahabis, which murdered the Rev. Henry A. Bilkert, American missionary, have been killed by bombs from British Air Force planes.

This bombing took place about fifteen days after the murder of Mr. Bilkert; and since one party of Arab camel riders looks very much like another, seen from the air, the British fliers could only have guessed vaguely that perhaps they had the right group. We suspect that they did not care very much. In the past, the same forces, operating in the same region, have on several occasions bombed Arab villages from the air in reprisal for the acts of bandits, when it was pretty certain that the victims would include numbers of women and children whose guilt, if it existed at all, was only that of sympathizing with their husbands and fathers. These airmen (and we do not doubt that personally they e charming, pink-cheeked English lads) believe in rorization. To kill a party of Arabs by dropping bombs from the skies is about as sporting as it would be to tie a deer to a tree and then shoot it with a machine gun; and that is just the idea which is intended to be conveyed. It is also the idea which lay behind the famous Dyer massacre at Amritsar. "Pacification" of the countryside in Arabia has been going on by these methods for years; and yet the unrest seems to be increasing. Do the British authorities ever ask themselves, we wonder, whether the wrong system is being used?

THE library of Jerome Kern, composer of popular music, which has just been sold at the Anderson Galleries in New York, has gone into book history as the third of the most famous rare-books sales in recent history. The first was the Robert Hoe library dispersal in 1911 and 1912, which fetched $1,932,056; the second was the Alfred Huth sale, with its sessions lasting through ten years, which brought $1,545,145, and now the dispersal of the Kern library, which by all the signs was collected with shrewdest investment foresight, with its gross earnings of $1,729,462. But it does something else, this Kern sale, besides being the second most important dispersal of books America has seen. It definitely fixes prices on what dealers characterize as "star pieces."

THE Kern sale also determined once and for all that, whereas a collector could buy Stevenson's "The Pentland Rising" for $575 a year ago, he will never be able to get it in good condition again for less than $825 to $1,250; or "A Child's Garden of Verses," which was $225, for less than $400 to $450; or Blackmore's "Lorna Doone," which was $400, for less than $2,400; or, most notable example of all, perhaps, Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," which was $75 twenty years ago, $200 three years ago, $800 two years ago and $1,800 a year ago, for less than $3,600. Of course, there are several books by Stevenson, Kipling, Barrie, Hearn, Galsworthy, Shaw, Clemens and other moderns which are not so greatly affected. But with the record values established by the Kern sale, some "firsts" of these moderns have reached a price corpulence far beyond the means of the average collector, the bibliophile whose income is his salary.

A MATTER which should seriously concern the legislatures now in session is the strengthening of the free public employment offices. Private agencies have many faults. As pointed out by the American Association for Labor Legislation, they are likely to misrepresent the jobs offered, they may charge exorbitant fees, they encourage labor turn-over because that means more business for them, they sometimes promote immorality. Since they deal with the weakest class in the community, they are always tempted to engage in exploitation. A decision of the Supreme Court in 1928 (Ribnik vs. McBride) took from the states the right to limit the fees of the private agencies. Public competi-

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tion, however, is entirely lawful. Public agencies are highly desirable on other grounds. They lay the basis for a standardized and coördinated system by which we may learn the facts about unemployment and handle it intelligently. Yet thirteen states have no public office and there are only 170 public exchanges in the whole country. In the last fiscal year the total funds available for them amounted to only $1,403,906—less than the cost of one cruiser. Mr. John B. Andrews is right in saying that the public employment service is starved.

Four-Wheel Brakes for Speculation

THE grievance of the large numbers of our population who have been on the make in Wall Street against the Federal Reserve Board, for its threat against further expansion of bank credit for speculative purposes, will bear examination. A good way to examine the grievance is to imagine what would have happened if the threat had not been made, or what will happen if the threat is not effective.

Common stocks have recently been selling on the exchanges at such high prices that the dividends paid would not yield as much return on the investment as the same amount of money put into government bonds. On General Electric and some of the other leaders, your investment would not bring you as high as 3 percent a year. Five percent or thereabouts was a good average yield, while in order to get as much as 8 percent you had to buy into industries which were depressed, or unusually risky, or had little prospect of further expansion. The motive of those who bought such stocks, therefore, could not be to hold them for the income derived, at the present rate of return. They must have been expecting, either to sell at a higher price, or to get larger dividends. If they did not do so, their money might better be in bonds or similar non-speculative securities. If their expectations are disappointed, their money will be withdrawn from the exchange and put into other kinds of investment.

This situation would in itself deserve cautious analysis if all the purchasers had bought all their stocks for cash. But that is, of course, far from the case. As always, many purchasers bought their stocks on a "margin"; they put up a small part in cash and borrowed the larger part. Brokers belonging to the Stock Exchange had by the end of January borrowed $6,735,000,000 to lend to their customers for just this purpose. That amounts to about one-fourteenth of the entire national income for a year. How much more the purchasers borrowed from other sources than these brokers it is impossible to say. During the past twelve months the loans on stock-exchange collateral placed by New York banks had grown $377,000,000 for the account of out-of-town banks and, for the account of "others," $1,511,000,000. Though their own loans for this purpose had shrunk $55,000,000, there was thus a net increase in brokers' loans for the year, through the New York banks, of $1,833,000,000. This immense expansion in *one year* represents over 20 percent of the amount of brokers' loans outstanding. The growth in speculative loans raises numerous important questions, but the point to be first considered is that the loans—which must be instantly repaid at any time at the wish of the lender—have in recent months commanded an interest of anywhere from 5 to 10 percent. In other words, the purchasers of stock have borrowed billions of dollars at one rate, in order to buy stocks yielding in many cases an appreciably lower rate of return. It is to be supposed that the purchasers would not have incurred this immediate loss, if they had not already put up a large part of their own cash resources. And they incurred it, obviously, because of a belief that the stocks bought would rise in value enough so that they could sell them and make more than they had lost on their borrowings. If, for any reason, the stocks do not continue to rise at a fairly rapid pace, these purchasers cannot afford to keep on borrowing to hold them. They must get rid of their stock, not only if they are "sold out" because a fall in the prices of shares endangers their margins, or if their loans are called, but if stock prices do not keep on going up fast enough.

Everything depends, as far as the speculators are concerned, therefore, on whether the rise in values of securities will continue as in the recent past. Those on the "constructive" side ("constructive" in the stock-market jargon means anything that will make stocks go higher) argue that it will. There will, of course, be minor and "technical" reactions, but the trend will continue upward, if nothing is done "artificially" to prevent it. The Federal Reserve Board's action is, by these commentators, placed in this category of artificial interference.

Why should stocks keep on going up? Though many reasons are adduced, only two are of basic importance.

One is, that nobody is thinking any more of the yield, but only of the possibilities of profit by resale at a higher price. Therefore, the demand of the purchasers will continue to grow. Everyone can keep on buying and selling on a rising market *ad infinitum,* just because it is rising. This is the familiar boom psychology which attaches itself to all speculative bubbles, and it necessarily leads to disaster. But, for this sort of inflation, a continual growth of credit in loans to speculators is necessary. If the Federal Reserve authorities have succeeded in cutting off the increase of credit to be used for this purpose, they have merely put on the brakes in time to avert disastrous collision.

The other main reason why continual growth in stock prices is looked for is that the companies issuing the stock are expected to experience an equally rapid growth of earnings, and hence of value. Why should they not go on enlarging their profits, they have in the past five years? In examining

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expectation, we get to the heart of the Federal Reserve action.

The increased demand for loans on the exchange, coupled with the limited supply of credit, has had a tendency to increase the prices of loans for all other purposes as well. It has, for example, tightened building credit. This is beginning to restrict construction—one of the mainstays of prosperity. The high rates which call loans command have also attracted large sums from business concerns—this is shown in the growth of a billion and a half dollars during the past year in the loans "for the account of others" made to brokers by New York banks. This money is, while it is loaned to speculators, not being used for current production of goods or for new construction. The credit resources of the country, while large, are not inexhaustible. The more they are attracted to loans to speculators, the less they can be employed for the actual production and exchange of goods which make the profits anticipated by the speculators. A village all of whose members live by taking in each other's washing is nothing compared with a nation all of whose citizens should try to live solely by speculating on each other's production. Yet that is the absurdity toward which the continual growth of speculative credit tends. In so far as the banking authorities are able to keep additional credit from going to the stock market in order that it may go to production and trade, they are safeguarding that very basic increase of prosperity which the stock buyers are counting upon.

If the prices of stock could keep on rising without a further growth in speculative loans, the banking authorities would not have the slightest objection. Unfortunately, however, that appears to be impossible. The more shares go up, the more people want to borrow in order to buy them, and the higher the interest on call loans. If the banks limit the use of their own credit, business concerns come in to take advantage of the high call rates. Funds flow from abroad—the Bank of England had to raise its rate in order to prevent the loss of so much gold to the United States that its currency would be endangered, with much worse consequences to its trade than will immediately be occasioned by the higher bank rates. This again raises the call rate in New York and attracts more loans not controlled by the banks. Apparently the only force that could ease the credit situation for more than a few days is a cessation of the increase in demand for speculative loans, and that could come only from a failure of stocks to go on rising. But such a failure would probably mean a crash to considerably lower values as well.

The real trouble with the market is not that the Federal Reserve authorities have attempted to put the brakes on speculative credit, but that they have not had four-wheel brakes to put on. They probably were not able to slow the car down soon enough. A moderate speed is better than a joy-ride ending in a smash.

What Is Wrong with Our State Department?

THE inadequacy of our State Department and Foreign Service establishments have been fairly obvious for a number of years. Reforms have been agitated at intervals, and legislation has been drafted to put an end to the more flagrant abuses. The Rogers Act of 1924, which reorganized the Foreign Service, was the last of a series of measures intended to revitalize the diplomatic and consular branches and place them on a definite career basis. But five years after the Rogers Act many of the basic problems remain unsolved.

Attention is now called to the organization and machinery of the State Department in Washington. A report written by W. T. Stone and published this week by the Foreign Policy Association declares that the proper functioning of the State Department is being seriously impaired by inadequate appropriations, and an unsatisfactory system of organization and administration. The organization in Washington has not been thoroughly overhauled in the past hundred years; methods and machinery are rusty, and its equipment quite inadequate to meet the needs of modern diplomacy.

The State Department, which is largely responsible for policy formation, is still entirely separate from the Foreign Service, which it administers. Unlike the British system, which provides for a unified service, our own forces the State Department to operate under laws governing all the other government departments in Washington. The salaries paid in the Department are lower than those paid in the Foreign Service, the promotion system is unworkable and the method of classification unsound. As a result, the State Department has not built up the kind of "professional" service it needs in Washington. It has been hampered in appointing competent experts in the important political, economic and legal divisions, both by the low salaries which prevail throughout the government service, and by its own failure to adopt any real system of selecting professional officers. While all appointments to the Foreign Service are based on written and oral examinations, appointments to the higher professional positions in the State Department are still made without any examination whatever. The Department is constantly losing the services of many of its best officers through resignation.

To fill the important professional positions for which it could not find competent experts, the State Department has resorted to the expedient of assigning Foreign Service officers to Washington. But the Rogers Act allows these officers to remain in the Department only four years, with the result that there is a constant turn-over in key positions where at least some degree of continuity is desirable. Furthermore, as a result of the higher sal-

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aries paid in the Foreign Service, the chief of a division who is unfortunate enough to be a permanent State Department officer frequently finds the salary of his Foreign Service assistant almost twice his own. While the intercourse of personnel is undoubtedly a healthy thing, the present system apparently works only one way. Though several hundred Foreign Service officers have served in the Department during the past four years, not more than two or three State Department officers have gone into the field. The State Department has actually been robbing Peter to pay Paul, as both branches of the Foreign Service have been crying aloud for additional officers. According to the Foreign Policy Association, more than fifty Foreign Service officers are detailed to the Department, while twice that number are needed in the field to take over consulates which are in charge of clerks and to strengthen missions which are seriously undermanned.

The State Department itself apparently acknowledges that all is not as it should be. According to its own spokesmen, however, the Department's greatest ills are due to lack of funds. Secretary Kellogg recently told Congress that the State Department did not have nearly enough money to function as it should. Annual appropriations, held down by the Bureau of the Budget in the interest of Coolidge "economy," have not been sufficient to care for day-to-day needs, let alone necessary expansion or reorganization. As a result of this penny-wise policy, the State Department has not received enough from current appropriations to transfer its officers from one post to another, to pay adequate rent allowances, to take on new Foreign Service officers, to replace those in the Department, or even to grant long-overdue promotions to its staff in Washington.

But this complaint is only partially convincing. It is true that the State Department gets but a microscopic slice of the taxpayer's dollar. One of our shiny new cruisers costs $17,000,000—just about $10,000,000 more than the total cost of operating the State Department and the entire Foreign Service for one year. And if the consular and passport fees turned back to the Treasury are deducted, the actual expense to the taxpayers of running the State Department and the Foreign Service is less than $1,000,000 a year. Nevertheless, the State Department has never come forward with a demand for the full amount which it needs. It has apparently been content to accept the verdict of the Budget without a fight, and has not yet given Congress a clear statement of its maximum needs. It is more than ten years since Walter Hines Page, in London, protested vainly against forcing American ambassadors to dig into their own pockets to meet the heavy expenses incurred in representing the United States government abroad. Although the Rogers Act specifically authorized representation allowance, not a cent has been appropriated, and the State Department itself has never asked for funds to remedy this particular ill. As a result, the principal qualification for an American ambassador is the possession of an independent income.

Nor has the State Department yet made a visible start toward setting its own house in order. Although Congress has criticized the way it has administered the Rogers Act, and now has under consideration at least three bills calling for the reorganization of the State Department, the Department itself has come forward with no general plan embodying its own ideas with regard to reorganization. It has not placed the full responsibility for the administration of the Department and the Foreign Service as a whole in the hands of any single officer of high rank, with the result that many administrative reforms have been neglected.

What appears to be most needed in the State Department is a thorough house-cleaning and an intelligent approach to the problem of organization. From the experience of other countries, there seems to be little doubt that consolidation of the foreign office and the field service has led to good results. The proposal has been made that the professional staff in Washington should be amalgamated with the Foreign Service to form a unified Service of Foreign Relations, and that new administrative machinery be introduced. But the most serious problem confronting the State Department is how to get the right kind of people in the important positions, both in Washington and the field. The influence of the permanent official in shaping policies and handling our relations with other states has become too important to be ignored. Its solution involves adequate salaries comparable to those in the professional world outside, a workable promotion system, and a sound method of selection governing the appointments of officers. Fortunately, there are strong indications that Mr. Hoover is alive to the importance of the general reorganization of our governmental machinery. Nowhere is there greater need for intelligent functioning than in the Department which handles our foreign affairs.

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HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT
T. S. MATTHEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN

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Mr. Hoover's Foreign Problems

The Chief International Questions Which the New Administration Must Answer

ON ASSUMING office, Mr. Herbert Hoover will find himself surrounded by a host of immediate problems, a number of which relate to foreign affairs. There is no need to dwell here upon the obvious fact that the financial and economic interests of the United States have expanded overseas with remarkable rapidity. These interests have become so vast that we have more at stake in the outside world than almost any other single people. The fundamental problem of future administrations at Washington will be to safeguard these interests without endangering international good will.

Many of the concrete issues awaiting solution can be only mentioned. Mr. Hoover may be asked to recognize Soviet Russia, to revive the Treaty of Lausanne with Turkey, to adhere to the World Court Statute, to reopen the immigration question with Japan, and to abandon our extra-territorial rights in China. He may be obliged to negotiate a new canal treaty with Panama, and he may have to decide whether or not to build the Nicaragua Canal. He may be asked to settle the future status of Porto Rico and the Philippines, and to terminate our occupation of Haiti.

So far as our relations with Latin America are concerned, the outlook for the next four years is bright. Mr. Hoover's South American trip, his strong non-intervention statement at Buenos Ayres, and the signature at Washington, on January 5, of two notable arbitration and conciliation treaties, not to mention the anti-war pact, should diminish the criticism hitherto directed against our Latin-American policy. If these treaties are loyally carried out, it will be difficult for the United States to intervene in Nicaragua, Haiti, or elsewhere, without submitting its acts to one of the commissions authorized in the conciliation treaty. The activities of Mr. Morrow in Mexico have shown us that the olive branch is more fruitful than the big stick; and it is not at all unlikely that, while the general aims of the United States in Latin America will remain unchanged, the method of supporting these aims will be modified.

So far as the relations between Europe and the United States are concerned, probably the most important issue concerns reparations and inter-Allied debts. The importance of fixing definitely the total reparation sum, or at least the number of annuities which Germany must pay, is generally recognized. But these sums cannot be fixed without considering the debt that the Allies owe to the United States. Naturally the Allies do not wish to receive less from Germany than they must pay to the United States. At present the debt annuities represent more than half the amount now paid by Germany to the Allies on reparation. The Treaty of Versailles fixed German payments at thirty years, yet the Allies are obliged to make debt payments to the United States for a total of sixty-two years. If it is unwise, from the standpoint of international good will, to require the German government to make a long series of payments to the Allied governments on reparation account, it seems equally unwise for the Allied governments to make a long series of payments to the United States Treasury on debt account. Commercialization of both debts and the liquidation of these annuities by a bond issue is an attractive-sounding solution. But apart from the present difficulties involved in marketing a large bond issue, the possibility should not be overlooked that this or any other solution may fasten the onus of the whole reparation question upon the United States. It is not improbable that, except for a moderate sum to be paid to France and Belgium for reconstruction purposes, the Allies will reduce the German reparation figure to a sum equivalent to what they owe the United States. In other words, they will waive many of their former demands upon Germany. Now obviously if, in the face of such reductions, the American government refuses to modify the debt agreements, and if the German government is obliged to make a long series of payments on behalf of the Allied governments to the United States or to the American investor, the irritation caused in the past by the reparation question between Germany and the Allied governments will be transferred to the United States. In short, we may be left holding the international bag. The simple solution would be for the next administration to agree to a cut in the inter-Allied debt in proportion to a cut in reparations. But in view of the present political feeling in this country, the likelihood of this cut seems remote. The only possibility of any such revision seems to lie in tying up the debt question with other questions, such as disarmament, in the solution of which the United States may find a *quid pro quo*.

Another question that remains unsolved is that of sea power—is the world to witness a new competition in naval armaments? Congress has, without much opposition, passed the fifteen-cruiser bill

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without the elimination of the time-limit as President Coolidge proposed. But we should not delude ourselves into the belief that the construction of these cruisers will give us "parity" with Great Britain. Even if, eventually, we do reach British tonnage, there will always be "experts" to warn us that because of the age and type of our vessels, and because of such factors as naval bases, merchant marines, and allies, our fleet does not have the combat strength of our potential enemies. There is a danger that the passage of the fifteen-cruiser bill will encourage the large-navy school to demand more and more ships, and that it will incite other governments, in less danger of attack than the United States, to increase their armaments both on land and sea. It was the naval rivalry between Great Britain and Germany which was one of the main causes of the World War; and it was the strength of the military machines in each of the great European countries which, as Professor Fay points out, broke down all the attempts of the civilian authorities to maintain the peace in the summer of 1914. Obviously there is no comparison between the Anglo-German situation before the World War and the Anglo-American situation today. Nevertheless, the limitation of armaments is one of the great problems before the world; and the limitation of navies by Great Britain and the United States must be realized before we may expect the continental powers to limit their armies.

Within the United States and Great Britain, various groups have expressed the opinion that the naval question will not be solved until an agreement is reached in regard to sea law, and that an international conference for this purpose should be held. The difficulty with this suggestion is that the people who advocate a sea-law conference have contradictory ends. In the United States, we are told that such a conference would secure the adoption of America's traditional attitude toward the freedom of the seas, so that henceforth we may trade with belligerents without interference. In Great Britain and on the Continent, they are told that such a conference would secure the relinquishment by the United States of its "neutral" rights in the case of a war which involved the application of League sanctions. A number of suggestions have been made to compromise these views. But the great difficulty in all of them is in establishing some international means of determining whether or not a state has violated its obligations and embarked upon an illegal war. The question is too complicated to be discussed here. The fact should, however, be emphasized that, as a party to the anti-war pact, the United States cannot logically insist upon the right to give aid to a state that violates that pact. Until we are ready to work out some coöperative relationship with the League Council, it is difficult to believe that a sea-law conference can accomplish more than the anti-war pact has already accomplished.

In one sense, this sea-law discussion arises out of a misplaced emphasis. We are debating the attitude of the United States towards the next war, without discussing what our attitude should be towards the concerted efforts to prevent a war from taking place. It is perhaps important to retain the principle of sanctions in the Covenant; but the Greco-Bulgarian and Bolivia-Paraguay cases both show that the most effective means of preventing war is not by applying such sanctions, but by mobilizing world opinion through conciliation machinery which examines disputes and prevents them from leading to hostilities. Now the United States has agreed to submit its own disputes to conciliation through the Bryan treaties. But if we really wish to ban war, we must agree to join forces with the other powers in the world in preventing wars from coming into existence. We realized this at the Pan-American arbitration conference when, startled by the Bolivia-Paraguay dispute, we timidly agreed to the establishment of diplomatic committees, at Montevideo and Washington, having certain conciliatory powers. But the United States is not necessarily represented on these committees, and obviously they cannot command as much respect and attention as such bodies as the League Council, or the Pan-American Union. If, in the future, two parties to the anti-war pact threaten to break off peaceful relations, I should like to see the League Council invite the United States to participate in an international conciliatory effort to keep the pact from being violated.

To claim that naval limitation is impossible until a concrete agreement on sea law has been reached is simply a gospel of despair. If this argument is accepted, friends of naval expansion will state that there is no use attempting to limit navies until all the other economic and political disputes of the world are settled. In the hands of proper negotiators it should be possible to find a basis of agreement according to one of several different formulæ. Perhaps the simplest is the establishment of a naval holiday, agreeing to maintain the *status quo* in tonnage between Great Britain and the United States (after the passage of the fifteen-cruiser bill) for a period of fifteen years. Such an agreement should contain some provision for replacement, but should ban all new construction.

Whether or not any such holiday can be indefinitely observed will depend upon the purposes for which navies are being built. If navies are simply for the purpose of maintaining international peace, coöperating according to an international scheme, the problem is simplified. But if navies are to serve as the symbols of fierce competition of governments for trade, each nation will demand and will construct more and more ships. Navies are not ends in themselves; they are the agents of policy. And in this industrial age, the question of policy is concerned largely with economic aspirations. What is the commercial policy of the United States today?

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Despite our tremendous foreign investments and increasing foreign trade, this country seems to stand more strongly than ever upon the principle of a high protective tariff. It is a principle to which the next administration is pledged. Nevertheless, as Mr. Hoover stated in his Boston speech, the "expansion of our export trade has a vital importance" because of our surplus production. The United States is now able to export commodities to a much greater extent than she imports them, because her tourists spend about a billion dollars a year in foreign countries, because we are lending huge sums abroad, and because of other "invisible" but perhaps not permanent items. Because of these expenditures, we have assumed that it is possible to follow a policy of protection at home and yet develop trade abroad. Whether this assumption is correct depends altogether on the extent to which we wish to develop our foreign trade. One might argue that, if the subways of New York were thrown out of kilter, people could get to work in taxicabs, but this would not mean that the economic life of New York would not be disorganized. The reduction of our tariff would not decrease tourist expenditures, but it would increase our foreign trade and thus assist in the reconstruction of Europe.

At the present time, foreigners find American goods flooding their own markets, and yet it is only with great difficulty that they can export their manufactures to the United States. Obviously, a high tariff wall is a psychological factor in causing international ill-will. Largely because of this tariff question, the relations between Argentina and the United States are critical, while Canada has become apprehensive over the tariff revision which is now being discussed in Washington. In Europe, France has led the way in imposing restrictions upon American imports, and if our tariff policy continues, we may expect to see the imposition of such restrictions in many other countries, as soon as they have met their reconstruction needs. Nevertheless, the tariff of the United States is no more protective than that of other countries who now severely criticize the commercial policy of the United States. The elimination of the international irritation caused by the tariff cannot come by the revision of the customs law of a single nation. The solution does not lie in the adoption of free trade. It lies in international consultation and agreement.

The next administration is also committed to the principle that the federal government should assist American private enterprise in the promotion of foreign trade. In his Boston speech, Mr. Hoover declared with pride that one of the first acts of the Republican administration "was to devise measures to vigorously restore and expand our foreign trade." The government had coöperated with our manufacturers in laying out and "executing strategic plans for expanding our foreign trade." A few months previously, in an address to the National Foreign Trade Council at Houston, Assistant-Secretary of State Castle declared, "Mr. Hoover is your advance agent and Mr. Kellogg is your attorney." As far as domestic business is concerned, the federal government does not supply business firms with lawyers or "strategic plans" free of charge. But for some reason the present administration feels that it is a proper use of the taxpayers' money to perform such services for our corporations in their activities abroad. When business men, as individuals, compete for trade in foreign countries, the competition is likely to be settled upon its business merits. But when governments throw themselves into the contest, it assumes political aspects which may become irritating to international relations. If you do not believe this, read the history of the Congo Free State or the Bagdad railway.

The solution to all these economic problems cannot be found in any species of economic war, in any search for "independent" sources of markets or raw materials, or in any attempt to establish an "independent" government-subsidized merchant marine. At the very time when there is an overproduction of rubber in the world, Mr. Ford is starting a rubber plantation in Brazil and Mr. Firestone is doing likewise in Liberia. At the very time when there is an overproduction of wheat in the United States, there are thousands of people in Europe who are underfed and there are thousands in China dying from famine. Our system of international exchange is out of kilter; it can be regularized to the profit of all countries only by the continuous and orderly processes of international coöperation.

The State Department is now completing a series of arbitration and conciliation agreements, by which all disputes to which the United States is a party will be given an airing before some international body established for that purpose. These treaties are of importance just as the participation of the United States in the World Court is important. But all this semi-legalistic procedure has little effect upon the realities of international life today. Conciliation and arbitration machinery can be used only after a dispute reaches a point where diplomats have, figuratively speaking, lost their tempers. Arbitration and conciliation boards may pass judgment upon the merits of the particular controversy, but they cannot plumb the depths of international life. We have not made use of a single Bryan commission during the last fifteen years. These treaties do not go to the heart of international intercourse. This heart lies in continuous coöperation, and in continuous consultation; it lies in the exchange of experiences and of varying points of view, out of which will slowly grow an international conscience and a willingness to adapt immediately conflicting interests to meet a larger whole. As far as international economic life is concerned, this coöperation may eventually lead to international agreements in regard to tariffs; it may eventually lead to the rationing of the international supply of raw mate-

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rials and of world markets, which to a certain extent has already privately taken place through international cartels. In the financial field, it may eventually lead to the financing of undeveloped countries by international arrangements already made use of in the case of the League loans to Austria, Hungary, Esthonia, Greece, and Bulgaria. The development of an international economic conscience will not be the work of a moment; it will not be spectacular; it will require years of silent, patient and arduous work, involving real compromises by conflicting national interests if the end is to be realized.

The only agency working for these distant ends is the League of Nations. We recognize the value of its work by participating in *ad hoc* League conferences. But the men we send to such conferences are technicians. We do not send to Geneva men having positions of political responsibility. Our statesmen do not have the opportunity of forming the international contacts which are common among statesmen of other countries. Moreover, while we take part in *ad hoc* conferences, we have no place in the Council or the Assembly, which determine the scope of these conferences and whether or not their recommendations should be carried out. The Hoover administration will be confronted with this vastly important problem: the working out of a more satisfactory *modus vivendi* between the United States and the peace-time activities of the League.

While there are reasons for viewing the present commercial policy of the United States—and of other countries—with misgiving, I do not wish to close this article in a pessimistic vein. Great progress has been made in the foreign policy of the United States during the last ten years. Our Latin-American policy has, especially since the Havana Conference, undergone a silent metamorphosis, and our policy towards China has been admirable. We have made repeated efforts at disarmament; our attitude towards the League, during the past few years, has greatly changed. The ratification of the anti-war pact is a stupendous event. I do not share the belief that, with the increase in foreign investments and an increasing realization of national strength, the American people are becoming more "imperialistic." If we blunder into war in the future, it will be because of blindness, and not by intent. The will to peace is as strong here as in any other country of the world; and certainly the organizations actively working for peace are more energetic than the organizations which favor militarism. For the past year or two the "good will" organizations of this country have concentrated their energies upon the anti-war pact. The conclusion of this agreement is due primarily to their zeal. But its conclusion has not ended the matter. It has simply increased their responsibilities. Despite the Senate debates, there was no serious opposition to the anti-war pact, simply because it does not, immediately at least, cost anything. Nobody wants war as long as he can get what he wants without fighting.

Ten years ago we heard much about the causes of war. Now we hear chiefly of its renunciation. But we must not allow ourselves to be drugged with platitudes. It has become the task of every person who really believes in the renunciation of war and who cares anything about a world based on international friendliness to devote himself to a study of the causes of war. While the immediate responsibility for the conduct of foreign policy during the next four years will rest with Mr. Hoover, the ultimate direction, in our particular type of democracy, must come from organized public opinion.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL.

(This is the first of two articles on the outstanding questions with which the incoming administration must deal. The second, on domestic questions, written by Mr. George Soule, will appear next week.)

Autumn Love

(English Sonnet of Italian Parts)

Easter thaws no overwintered mind
With its pale burning. Centered in the cake
Of cold the heart fluttering can but ache
And wish the spring away. On an Easter wind
Came she, his lump of locked earth to unbind.
But too white shone the unseasoned lilies plucked
Which still the snows attainted, and no bees sucked,
And he refused her bosom, white and kind.

Great was summer; its fat boughs unshaken,
Its red and thirsting face, its frowzy plumes
That nodded, and its fervent rosy fumes.
She leaned like a rich flower to be taken,
But his cold Northern heart would not awaken
To her strong fire, and fevered with half-love
He trembled and went stealthy through the grove,
Leaving her gift ungathered and forsaken.

Vengeance struck with autumn; flapped its blear
And ragged banners; spilled the blossoms; grayed
The plumes and dusted with its cannonade.
Then warned of winter, of these disgraced and dear
Already wasting, and bright crowns grown sere,
He ran to seek her, and by the rushes found
Her sunken cold with treachery on the ground.
There they clung, in the ashes of the year.

Her tears filled up her eyes, and unconfessed
His tears lumpily thickening in the throat
Muffled his valiant pledges, every note.
By the sad yellow passage of the sun
They kissed in tears, and heard the fowler's gun
Bark at a few faint birds far from the nest.

JOHN CROWE RANSOME.

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So This Is Farm-Relief Finance!

How the Politicians Betray the Farmers

THE United States is in banking up to its ears. Losses running into many millions of dollars have occurred in Federal Intermediate Credit Banks, capitalized by the government, and the farmers' own Land Banks, operated but not owned by the government. Yet repeated demands to investigate these losses have been sidetracked in Congress. Senator Howell (Rep.) entered a resolution in 1924, a Treasury auditor having previously testified that 880 millions, in farmers' Land Bank funds, had escaped Treasury audit, and proof having appeared that the Federal Farm Loan Board had set up an account with moneys detached from these funds, in a private Washington bank, disbursing some $37,000 over one signature, without vouchers or receipts. No action was taken, although, according to Treasury analysts, this Federal Board possesses dangerous power through its dual functions of management and supervision, a condition which is inconsistent with safety.

Last spring, as a result of known losses of one million in the Intermediate Credit Bank of Columbia, S. C., and other unannounced losses in the farmer's Land Banks, and also the private Joint Stock Land Banks (all three are supervised by the Federal Farm Loan Board), Senator Blease (Dem.) demanded investigation in that district, which includes Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas. The president of two of the Columbia banks, the Intermediate and the farmers' Land Bank, was H. C. Arnold, whose qualifications for the responsibilities of banking appear slight. He had formerly been deputy-warden of the Atlanta Penitentiary. The two first-mentioned banks, run by the same board, have assets of eighty million dollars. The Senator's resolution was pigeon-holed, after the Farm Loan Board had defended Arnold before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, and certain new appointments were made—but late in 1928 the Board accepted Mr. Arnold's resignation.

Senator Blease renewed his demand at the beginning of the current session, citing the fact that losses in the farmers' Land Banks would run to millions, mentioning an alleged confession made by Arnold two years ago, as well as a defalcation for which one employee had been sent to jail, two unexplained suicides of cashiers, and other embarrassing incidents. Senator Caraway, complaining that Arkansas farmers could not get loans, offered to support the resolution if it were broadened to include the St. Louis District. Wheeler, of Montana, made a similar offer if the Spokane District were covered. On January 28, the broadened resolution was introduced, including the whole system and the Federal Farm Loan Board.

The inquiry is now more important than ever, because of a recent attempt by politically appointed executives of the Land Banks to shift the burden of liabilities to the farmer-stockholders. The law is based on mutual aid. In the past, the banks holding the assets have, as the Act stipulates, borne the losses, distributing them among associations. This is reasonable; one area may be prosperous, one depressed; but all pull together.

In December, some four hundred associations in the Berkeley District were asked to sign an agreement, of dubious legality, by which each association was thereafter to assume its own losses. At first glance, this seems perhaps mere accounting. But in practice, it invites dangerous consequences. Farmers belonging to financially embarrassed associations may soon find themselves facing bankruptcy. Each farmer is compelled to buy stock in the Land Bank to 5 percent of the amount he borrows. His stock has double liability. If the association he must join gets into hot water, members can be compelled to pay 10 percent of the amount of their loans. This is enough, when farm-incomes are low, to ruin many. California raisin-growers are suffering from depression. One association refused to sign this agreement because its losses would be increased twelve-fold, and for years it had borne its share of common losses. Other associations were misled by plausible representations, and gave up their legal birth-right.

Attorneys for the several banks and the Federal Board conferred on this plan and are understood to have authorized a standard type of agreement which all banks are to persuade their associations to sign. Why do they advise this? Presumably because, if the present huge losses of the banks were transferred to the associations, whose books nobody except inside examiners ever sees, the books of the banks would be clear. The financial statements of the banks might once more be miraculously improved, under Eugene Meyer's regime, as they were by the sudden reversal of policy in estimating assets adopted last March. Investors might be inveigled into buying bonds more liberally. The figures would appear to justify continued political control. And the losses would, in effect, be concealed.

Yet this procedure is so certain to check the growth of the system, if it does not cause its gradual death, that one wonders where the idea originated in the political-financial community. Mutual aid is practically abandoned. Lone-handed, instead of

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coöperatively, the associations must fight out their battles. How can embarrassed associations persuade new farmers to take their loans from the system when associations with delinquencies and losses may not distribute dividends? Why should farmers join, purchase stock with double liability and the added risk of political management, when loans are easily available elsewhere at only slightly higher interest? If associations have no hope of cancelling losses out of the gains of new business, and farmers everywhere become frightened when certain stockholders are called upon to meet their liability, the system will fall into disuse. To be sure, it can be kept nominally alive for some years—that is, jobs can be saved. But as soon as it becomes inactive, *interest rates on mortgage loans will inevitably rise.* Are administrators unaware of these implications? The pending resolution is highly important.

There are plenty of figures available to justify the claim that the Farm Loan system is sound in theory. But figures are not enough. Men and farmsteads are involved, and their protection requires a thorough investigation to discover what old principles and new safeguards should be invoked. Government bureaucracies, operating any business, have well known faults. And in the handling of huge sums of money, for lending, these faults become magnified. We have not yet forgotten the disaster of the Bank of the United States. Our modern rural credit systems multiply the unhappy chances of that early venture a million-fold. Why, then, does not Congress investigate?

Politics!

Since political appointees control the raising of thirteen hundred million dollars to finance the farmers, the allocating of this money geographically, and the lending of it in small sums, many fat perquisites have grown up, which render this huge Land Bank machine a new dollar-force in American politics. Some of the hidden emplacements are as unsuspected by the public as those for German world-war guns. In political hands, insidious capacities have been developed. The whole machine is out of the control of the farmer-stockholders, whose money is being spent by office-holders, whose farmsteads—worth two or three billions—are pooled as the basis for credit, and whose very independence may prove to be at stake. Burdened with debt, subject to policies which may be merely the result of incompetence, and with recourse only to Congress, which has so far proved insensitive to appeal, where do the farmers come out? Or do they?

Consider the powers of the machine which raises the funds. The Federal Land Banks issue bonds two or three times a year—subject to the approval of the Federal Farm Loan Board—to be sold to the general public. Valuable privileges, of course, inhere in the control of the sale of these securities. For eleven years one syndicate of investment houses has had exclusive, preferential control. The members of this syndicate include the National City Company; Harris, Forbes; the Guaranty Trust; Lee, Higginson; Brown Brothers; and Alexander Brown and Sons, of Baltimore.

An Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, C. G. Dewey, has testified that the rate of interest on these bonds is developed by these investment houses underwriting the bond sale. The law automatically fixes the rate of interest paid by farmers for their loans at 1 percent higher than the rate paid to investors for use of their money; therefore the syndicate has the power to develop the farmers' interest rate. Furthermore, the syndicate influences, if it does not determine, the amount and time of issue of these bonds. To maintain the supposed nation-wide distribution, it has organized a secondary syndicate. Membership in this subsidiary is never divulged, nor is any account given of the sales made by it. But the first and second syndicates together have held a virtual monopoly of the bond sale. The Federal Land Banks and their fiscal agent have sold directly a very small percentage. Outside houses must secure bonds, if customers want them and any are available, from syndicate members. Thus the syndicate has enjoyed a virtual mastery of the terms, and the amount and time of funds allowed to flow through the farmers' system; this is contrary to the intent of the law, which granted the bonds tax-exemption to help farmers secure the best terms, the lowest interest, the amounts they needed, and independent control of their own financial arrangements.

The financial credit-community may, as H. G. Wells suggests, have no mind. But certainly its behavior, when it is deemed necessary to sustain interest rates, indicates that at least it has instinct—overpowering instinct. Presumably, the whole banking world opposed the Farm Loan Act for the reason that, if non-profit or coöperative banks succeeded in lowering the farmers' interest rates, other groups than farmers might demand equal privileges, including tax-exemption, from Congress.

And when the Act passed, despite this opposition, it was surely not wholly accidental that the first political appointees were men who, as the first annual report shows, had no conception of the character of coöperative credit. In organizing, they laid down policies which today tend to prevent stockholder-control of even the local farm-loan associations.

The problem of selling these bonds called for genuine ability. Mr. Griswold, of Alexander Brown and Sons, saw financial advantages in this job; obviously, if the bonds were properly introduced, their sale might run to hundreds of millions, and the commissions, although low, would at least guarantee a steady business. Financiers, once convinced, displayed tardy patriotism. Exclusive, preferential control was granted. Perhaps no one, at that time, could have dreamed all that this might one day mean.

But observe what has happened. The law con-

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templated the widest possible distribution of stockholders among small investors (hence the small denominations of bonds), and a method of distribution that would make these securities available continuously. Instead, the sale has been periodic; large customers of the syndicate took most of the offerings; there has been a narrow distribution among corporations and individuals with incomes in the higher tax registers. Since these bonds are tax-exempt, it is possible for such buyers, as Eugene Meyer has testified, to save 13½ percent on their income taxes. Efficiently enough, the syndicate has sold twelve hundred millions of Land Bank bonds, yet certainly the law did not contemplate that income-tax evaders should be able to get them easily, while small investors, unless they happened to be syndicate customers, obtained them only by special effort.

For many years, this exclusive arrangement between the banks and the syndicate was maintained *without contracts,* first by the Federal Board, and later by the fiscal agent, Charles E. Lobdell, former Farm Loan Commissioner, who resigned December 31, 1928. The control of this vast business was left to personal agreements, awarded by political appointees. Were Treasury certificates or government bonds disposed of in this manner, bitter criticism would be provoked, no matter how reliable the firms which benefited. And criticism is no less deserved here, for, under this system, the government has assumed somewhat the position of a trustee towards the farmers' banks. What redress, without legal contracts, have stockholders in case of error or dishonesty? Without the taking of competitive bids for the privilege of handling such bond-sale contracts, how do stockholders, or the Board, know that the distribution could not be made cheaper or the money secured elsewhere at lower cost?

Active hostility to this system still flourishes in various quarters of the banking world, notably, of course, among the old-line mortgage group. It appears to be startling news, however, that the leading rival of the primary syndicate, Kuhn Loeb and Company, has, from the first, consistently refused to sell Farm Loan bonds. Presumably this boycott is shared by houses sympathetic in financial policy, or otherwise allied, to Kuhn Loeb. That firm "does not advise Federal Land Bank bonds" for investors. Its heads have never believed in the principles of the system. Since they can scarcely be held less patriotic than the "Morgan group," why this disbelief? Is it merely a coincidence that they do not participate in the primary syndicate?

It can now be clearly seen that the fiscal policies approved by the Federal Farm Loan Board have left the stockholders in a position of helplessness. Yet the office-holders, who let out the bond-selling privileges, have seemed satisfied, provided there was no danger of losing their jobs. The investment firms who secured exclusive, preferential control, have been content. Neither wished the contractless understanding to be disturbed; for what might not happen if the stockholders took over the management? In considering what did happen to the stockholders, these facts must not be lost sight of. It is ever interesting to reflect on the contrast between the congenital distrust of farmers shown by politicians and the pathetic trust of farmers in the government, whatever its representatives.

For four years, political administrators fended off trouble. By 1919, farmer-stockholders of the banks were entitled to elect the directors of most of their District Land Banks, and to begin managing them. These directors, a clear two-thirds majority, were to set fiscal policy, including that for bond-sale arrangements, subject to the Federal Farm Loan Board's approval. Yet no elections were called. When the farmers and their organizations investigated, they discovered that, during the War, an amendment had been slipped through which deprived stockholders of the right to operate their own banks. When the Treasury, anxious to keep Farm Loan bonds out of the way of Liberties, had secured power to buy a hundred millions of Federal Land Bank securities, a clause had been inserted providing that the temporary Boards of the banks —all political appointees—should remain in office as long as the Treasury held any Land Bank bonds.

Dissatisfaction became acute, and the Federal Board realized that new action was necessary. Amendments were prepared, introduced, and effectively supported before the House, depriving the stockholders permanently of their clear majority control, substituting a camouflage of fifty-fifty control by which the farmers were to elect three members, and the Federal Board to appoint four, to each district Land Bank Board. To assure the enactment of this provision, another neat device was employed: a conference committee slipped this rewriting of the Farm Loan Act, which the Senate had not had a chance to consider, between two bills which had already passed both Houses. The head of the conference committee, Senator McLean, on reporting the compromise measure, omitted to inform the Senate of the real import of Title III. Undiscussed, and unread, the measure advocated by the Farm Loan Board became law. According to Senator Fletcher, its real effect was a quasi-confiscation of farmers' property rights in the Land Banks. It left these stockholders the only owners of enterprises in the United States who had no control of their own concerns, a right declared by the Supreme Court to be vested in the ownership of stock. At last, after six years free from disturbance by stockholders, the first elections of directors were held—but became the source of fresh grievances, because of indefensible redistricting and electioneering methods countenanced by the Board.

What a perversion of good intentions! Congress, benignly wishing to help agriculture, had granted a great liberty, by which farmers were to gain the leverage of credit. Politicians seized this power. Financiers gained and held prized privileges, which

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counteracted the good that real leverage might have achieved for the farmers. Congress, in short, having thoughtfully given, carelessly took away, and the stockholders now find themselves practically incapable of disturbing appointees or affecting fiscal policies. The financiers develop the interest rate. Political administrators deflate land values through the very Land Banks themselves, in tune with the prevalent conviction that prices must go down. As a result, many farm families lose their farmsteads, which are their only means of livelihood. It is a national situation: but can the political-financial community be investigated?

Meanwhile, there is another ugly aspect of the matter: the amount of bonds sold to provide funds to lend through this system has materially decreased, year by year, since 1923. In 1927 some eighty million dollars (as against 225 million in 1923) were actually loaned by Land Banks to farmers. Applicants in all sections of the country were in desperate need of large loans at the lowest possible interest, but many of them could not be supplied. This was precisely what Senator Caraway complained of in his own bailiwick.

Now consider certain parallel facts: as these funds diminished year by year, the Joint Stocks steadily outloaned the Federals. Mr. Melvin E. Traylor, head of the American Bankers' Association, is heavily interested in Joint Stock Land Banks. In fact, the whole system competes with the Federals. With the farmers' own system slowed up, the private Joint Stocks had a free hand to get more business. Their rates, of course, are higher.

When questioned concerning the apparent limitation of the Federal Land Banks' issue and sale of bonds, members of the Farm Loan Board have evasively suggested that the saturation point for the sale of Land Bank securities on the market had perhaps been reached.

But this was *not* the case in 1927, when the farmers only got 82 million; for 177 million were actually sold. The other ninety-odd million were used to buy back from the Treasury, and retire, the bonds bought during the War.

Why, with farm distress still prevalent, should the administration have been moved to sell out? If the handsome figures provided by the banks and the Federal Board have been honest, why should the government have withdrawn, while agriculture was admittedly still in need of every help it could get? Had the government held on, the farmers might have secured at least that ninety million at a low interest. Who advised the government to unload? What apprehension prompted it—or was this, too, merely a case of muddling through?

The Federal Farm Loan Board, of which Mr. Eugene Meyer has for eighteen months been the head, must approve the fiscal policies of the Federal Land Banks and Federal Intermediates. It must approve every issue of Joint Stock securities. Will this limitation of good-term credit to farmers go on? Will the recovering Joint Stocks again outloan Federals? Will exclusive, contractless, secret agreements govern the sale of farmers' Land Bank securities? It is rumored that more money is to be spent in advertising Federal Land Bank bonds. Will the new arrangements, made by whoever takes over the fiscal agent's duties, continue to feed Wall Street and starve Main Street? The first step to be desired is independence for the stockholders of the Federal Land Banks, and the restoration to them of the once-guaranteed, and certainly deserved, control of their own credit pool.

GERTRUDE MATHEWS SHELBY.

(This is the second of a series of three articles, of which the last will be published in the New Republic next week.)

All God's Chillun Got Mentioned

IT WAS a cruel, windy night in February—just the kind of night, Elmer Durkin held, to sit by a hot stove and make cabinets.

"I get a wallop out of that indoor sport," the newsdealer told his guest, J. T. Riland of the Woppingtonian. "It plugs up a hole between New Year's and April Fool."

Editor Riland said he had not followed the gossip closely.

"That matter can safely be left to the wisdom of Herbert Hoover."

"Well, you old crab! You helped push him into this jam and now you don't give him a mit."

Putting on a shovelful of coal, Elmer further deposed and said:

"It was soft for Herby as long as he was goodwilling in laughin' America, but when he got back to wishy Washington the grief started. H. H. carried forty states and every one sent a flock of staters to help him do his home work. These pilgrims sailed over to the Mayflower and brought their fancy cabinet making. He had to see everybody, including some he never could see with a spyglass, like the prominent calamity, Jim Watson. They propositioned him to and fro and it was a pipe that every man jack of them was willing to toot a sax personally in victor Herbert's band if backed in a corner and choked a little.

"I hope to tell you, J. T., it was a kayo for the Heir Apparent. He had been ballyhoovering America as a land where nobody ever went hungry except deserving Democrats, and here were God's Own People starving all over his best rug. Besides the which he had four tons of gimme letters saying 'When do we eat?' By Thursday he knew he was a simp to waste all that swell chow on those overfed Belgians.

"The inkhounds parked on the doormat casing the breadline and if a face came out that looked

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like it hadn't been stepped on much, they took its name and home address and gave it a ride. Any patriot that couldn't show Hoover hoof-prints on his frame was elected to the Maybe Club. Came dawn and we inhaled with our grapenuts dope like this: 'George W. Whoosis Looms for Secretary of Whatsis.' The next day they slipped us the sour news that Whoosis was not looming so hot. He was never seen alive again, but he was good for two hunches, one up and one down. Eight to five Herbert never caught the guy's name.

"One weary word-walloper, two sticks shy on his Capital letter with the deadline staring him in the pan, appointed Coolidge to the supreme bench, Cal and the Court crave each other like Stewart and Rockefeller, but did that cramp a literary bozo with four kiddies yowling for chow?

"There was the sad case of Mrs. Alvin T. Hert, Hubert Work's girl friend. The old Doc chiselled her into the cabinet on his own, but this didn't listen good to the head man so she faw down go boom. Mabel Willebrandt was already Brodied off the bridge and no other women are in the picture. Well, a Republican cabinet is practically no place for a perfect lady, at that.

"The burningest question was, what kind of birds would Herbert cuddle up with mostly, boy scouts or hard-boiled stouts? Where would the Good-Work twins get off and Slemp, the dealer in used postmasters, and Moses, the galloping ghost, author of 'Hot Stuff on Smith'? Would there be a cut of pie for Horace Mann? He could qualify for Secretary of Bigotry, only they ain't no such animal.

"A figuring fool says over fifty have been mentioned into the cabinet and it will hit a century by the glorious fourth of March. A hundred neediest cases to jimmy into ten pews! No wonder Hoover ankled off to that chain store island where nobody is hungry but the fish.

"It's a tough enough break if you start from scratch, but here were the titleholders all set to pack their telescopes, yet willing to listen to an argument. Mellon had abolished poverty, anyhow in the upper brackets, Kellogg had abolished war, and Wilbur had abolished peace. Would Herb up and abolish all these able abolishers? The guess conductors played each secretary both ways. Personally I doubt if these birds know much more about it than Herbert does. Today's lowdown is that the merry Andrew and Jardine will stick, and some crapehangers are handing us another load of Wilbur. Say, if that bird gets his meal ticket renewed I do a personal nose dive off the Odd Fellows Block into the front page of the Woppingtonian!

"With all this settled as clear as Einstein, what rank outsiders should snag ringside squats? It leaked out that he liked Donovan for Attorney-General, but the killjoys landed on this poor fish from the fourteen points of the compass. It listens like Wild Bill was scratched, but the ink-slingers are still playing him on the nose. Dwight Morrow showed class for Secretary of State and then faded, and today's dope-sheets are touting Stimson.

"One busy little rumorist got James W. Wadsworth all slated up for Secretary of War. Personally, I think Jimmy's got about as much chance to cop as Horace W. With—say, listen, J. T. Let me horn in a word once in a while." Elmer had obviously been bitten by a thought. "Here's a hot one for your paper. Horace W. Witherspoon has been mentioned for Attorney-General."

"By whom?" asked the cautious editor.

"By me. I got a license to mention guys even if I did bleed and croak with the Happy Warrior. That's an inalienable right like crabbing about taxes and kidding Jimmy Walker. Our big cheese has always done right by the G. O. P. and no larceny was ever hung on him. You couldn't call him unmentionable. It would please Horace and slip cheap giggles to young and old. Let's go!"

Mr. Riland shook his head.

"I'm afraid the judge is a little too local."

"We should be snooty about bush-leaguers," said Elmer, "after John Garibaldi Sargent!"

FELIX RAY.

Washington Notes

THE swinishness of our so-called "manufacturing interests," already disgustingly evinced before the Ways and Means Committee of the House in these earliest efforts to raise the tariff schedules, calls attention to several interesting and significant situations. One is the enfeebled state of the once-militant progressives in Congress and the lack of leadership among them. The first, of course, is the natural corollary of the second, and it simply paralyzes anything like progressive strength and effectiveness. To those who recall the power of these Senate independents under the late La Follette, and fully grasp the potentialities of a well led, balance-of-power group, swinging between the two parties, their present supineness is not without a tragic flavor. Sometimes it almost makes you weep to see the opportunities lost.

The real trouble with the Senate progressives is that there is not among them a genuinely strong man who combines stability of conviction with a reasonably clear head and first-class political brains. Neither Borah nor Norris does. The latter is a free lance without the characteristics necessary for conference and coöperation. He "goes through" more surely than any other man in the Senate, follows his principles and ideas with complete and fine contempt for party fences and patronage, is undaunted by any threat of personal political consequences. But such a thing as mapping out strategy for a group, planning an effective fight in which a small body of men can be compactly used with the maximum effect—such things as that are hopelessly beyond him. He simply is not built for harness work.

As for Borah, despite the brilliant flashes that occasionally come from him, and notwithstanding his more

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than considerable talents as an orator and debater, his inability to lead the progressive group is too obvious to need argument. They simply will not follow him. He is a force in the Senate, and a force for good, and it would be a sad Senate without its Borah, but as a progressive leader he does not click, and as a fighter he fails because he never fights to the finish. The party barrier stops him every time. Everybody knows this, and that knowledge disqualifies him from functioning as an independent leader. But there are other reasons the progressives do not look to Borah for Senate leadership. One of these is the apparently congenital difficulty he has in distinguishing between a good idea and a bad one, which accounts for the amazing number of interesting projects he first picks up and then drops.

The habit of abandoning his own proposals may be all right from the personal standpoint. In other words, when a man discovers that the idea he advocates is unsound, it is more sensible to recognize that fact and drop it than to continue to pursue a suggestion in which you have lost interest or belief. That sort of thing, however, repeated as he has repeated it, is a serious handicap to leadership of any sort. Borah has few followers inside the Senate or out, because, despite his fine qualities as a man and his conceded ability as a statesman, no one can ever be sure how far he will go with the children of his own ardent intellect. At Kansas City, where he could at least have forced a Sinclair denunciation into the Republican platform, or at any rate have made a stirring fight for the principle he espoused—and it was a sound principle—he had apparently forgotten there was such a person as Sinclair in the world. Elder Hays, who, with Colonel Stewart, remains our most eminent ambiguous witness, was not so much as mentioned. It is that sort of thing that keeps Borah from having a following.

There isn't anyone else with leadership possibilities among the progressives. It is useless to talk of Hiram Johnson, who is much too bad-tempered, and it is ridiculous to talk of the younger La Follette, who, while a likable enough young man, is utterly without the inner fire of his father. For the rest, they are mainly small-bore fellows, full of little jealousies, with no serious purpose in mind except that of promoting their own personal political fortunes. From time to time, the progressives in the Senate will act together, as on the Roy West confirmation vote, but it will be without preconcerted plan or common purpose. Most of them do not want a real leader, for the simple reason that he would mean disciplined followers, who speak only on direction and are debarred from grand-stand solo performances.

This plight of the progressives is not pleasant to contemplate, but the situation does exist, and it appears to bear out the discouraging prediction of Senator Norris that in the coming session of Congress the great financial interests of the country will have less in the way of real opposition to their legislative desires than they had in the one about to close, that they will be more completely immune from effective criticism and more unchecked in their progress toward unregulated concentration of the nation's resources in a few hands. The best proof of the soundness of the Norris notion is the lack of interest upon the part of the progressives in the scramble for increased tariff rates now just about started. There is every indication that the present committee hearings are preliminary to perhaps the greediest and most sordid struggle for unfair and unjustifiable tariff advantages we have ever seen.

Already the trading has begun, the log-rolling and back-scratching are under way. The idea that the tariff increases at the special session can be rigidly held to those articles purchased in large quantities by the farmers is not seriously entertained by party leaders in Washington, and seems disproved by the activities of the Grundys who are converging here from every direction and who, combined, compose an irresistible army—at least, it has so proved in the past. That the Democratic opposition to the general tariff elevation will be feeble and futile is already insured, first, by the abandonment of Democratic tariff principles in the last campaign, and second, by the known fact that more than half the Democratic Senators have powerful pet interests in their own states for which they are pledged to obtain tariff increases, well knowing they can only obtain such increases by selling their votes to the Republican protected interests. And this they are fully prepared to do, regardless of the ultimate bill the people will have to pay. In such a situation as this promises to be, a virile, cohesive band of ten or twelve progressives—and there are approximately that number of Senators who call themselves progressives—headed by a real man, could get the ear and capture the attention of the country. It will be a great opportunity. Such a band might upset the whole hoggish business and put the robbers to rout. If it did nothing else, it could keep alive the spirit of protest and perhaps make the real issue in the 1930 congressional campaign. It is pathetic that the present progressives do not appear to have enough virility in their systems to play their hand.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Splendid Squalor

MY FRIEND has just returned from Paris, where she has been for some months, and since her friend, Mrs. X, who came back from Europe the first of November and has been exhausted since the fifteenth of January, has gone to Florida for a rest, she is staying in the X apartment.

Mrs. X is a woman past middle age, with a son who is luxuriously married and has an establishment of his own; so that she lives in the solitude of her ten servants. She is a good deal poorer than the rest of her family, and lives on $50,000 a year. On this she has the apartment on Park Avenue, with one butler, several maids, the kitchen people and the chauffeur, who looks like a college student in the lounging suits that he wears when he drives the Lincoln, and who would be like a member of the family if there were any family to be a member of.

Mrs. X, when she went away, left a note for her

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guest, which said how sorry she was that one must go out instead of dining at home on Thursdays and that it was not possible to put the shoes out at night, the boots-boy came twice a week; and later when my friend asked one of the maids to do some pressing, the maid said well, perhaps, since it was only for a short stay. Things are settled now, however, and my friend and I have been drinking tea together, slowly and leisurely, for it is the kind of tea that one may take one's time over, since it is as hot at one time as another. She has been telling me of an event in the French theater that makes Paris a gorgeous dream for her.

Madame Ida Rubinstein came first to Paris with the Russian Ballet, and has made a name for herself there in many directions, even for Paris; but, whatever excellence she may once have had, she is no longer a dancer to speak of. As a performer she is best when she is static, and as an artist in the theater, most important when she organizes and creates an ensemble, and draws about her in their fullest exuberance so many fine talents. As my friend remembers it, Madame Rubinstein gave three programs, two or three times each, six or eight performances in all, and the cost of this venture was rumored to be around 8,000,000 francs—where the money came from is doubtless a private matter, the point is where it went. For her enterprise she took the National Opera House.

On these programs there came, for instance, a Stravinsky ballet in five scenes, in the utmost elaboration and style. There was an allegorical comedy with music of Bach's; and for this Benois did the décor, and designed costumes from Saxe figurines, those delicate poets and shepherdesses and gallants, and all their delicate names, Chloe, Cupid, Psyche and the rest. There was a piece in the baroque of the eighteenth century, to music by Mozart. And for another example, there was a ballet to the music of some modern Spanish composer, in which the entire stage was occupied by a gigantic table that might have been taken from some fabulous café, and on it moved the figures of the dancers, turned to Lilliputians by this entrancing disproportion—with what a blaze of light, what copious nuance from Benois's genius!

Such brilliance was it for those six or eight performances. An audience turned out that made one believe the days before the War had come again; the prices were high and speedily were doubled, all the standing room in the Opera House was crowded. The dancers were from the school of Madame Nijinsky; the coöperation was extraordinary, the detail sumptuous, the spirit of everything high, witty, resplendent. This year Madame Rubinstein had come off more triumphantly than ever. Then the doors closed and it was over.

As my friend talks of all this, of this gorgeous interval, with Paris in its old-time *chic,* and the glamor of that old time come back to the world instead of the shabby-mindedness of post-war things, and as she tells me of the rich light plunged upon one figure and another, and of those settings and costumes, that ensemble of music, dancing and design, I am looking at the apartment and at those beams cutting here and there across the plaster ceiling around us. Never before have they seemed so obstreperous as today. These beams come down a foot from the ceiling, and give off an air of engine-rooms and modified basements. They occur in the more expensive apartment houses all over New York, which means they will soon occur in apartment houses all over the country.

If I should say to the promoters of these houses, as the plans are being drawn, that it ought to be possible to leave out such beams, burying them between floors, they would tell me that the cost of sacrificing so much space would be prohibitive; and this would have to do for me, though at the back of my head I know perfectly well that the renters would quite as soon pay a few thousands more than they do now and that the mere absence of beams could be pointed out as further luxury. At this point I should remember what the manager of one of the city's most luxurious and expensive hotels said one day to the manager of a smaller place I frequent, where no substitutes are used in the food; his own overhead was such, the great manager declared, that he could not afford such a course; which goes with a like remark from the manager of a high-sounding club, who, when I boasted reproachfully of my place, said it was all true, but that if he left off substitutes he would go bankrupt in a week. In sum, you can pay as high as you will for rooms, baths, bell-boys and elevators, but you can't, under that gilded roof, have scrambled eggs that are straight eggs from the farm.

I look at those beams and think of a young director I know, who has charge of a municipal theater in California, backed by hordes of millionaires. He has made a great success with them, and is praised to the skies, because of his economical management. I think of a palace in New York from the entrance of which four butlers pilot you to the drawing-room, where a gas log turns the air into memories of motor highways to New York on Sunday afternoons; and in the same dull odor of economy, mediocrity and that curious physical fatigue that comes from the lack of any full spirit leaping into life, I think of the Metropolitan Opera, where all is so satisfactorily run now that the financial balance is said to be greatly improved, and where people with a taste for this fiscal excellence appear to fill the seats. We hear the argument that the opera must support itself—which it never has in history, not even with the Greek drama—that the excellence of its management will thus be shown, and that the extent to which it supports itself is measured by the amount of desire the public has for it and vice versa—as if, alas, Dante might not want something created that would cost his city ten thousand *scudi* but would draw from this creation what might make his race immortal, where on the other hand ten thousand of the townsmen might be willing to pay a *scudo* each for something that would be worth nothing at all. But luck is against us here. Such a naïve lack of any conceptions with regard to ends in living or any scale of values begins so high up that hope grows pale; under the theme of that brainless economy preached from the White House, and turned so cheaply to the uses of radio and ballot boxes, anything in art must pay as it goes or at least mean to pay.

There are fortunes given in New York to one good

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cause or foundation after another, and to various institutions and schemes in the arts, especially those in which committees can sit and a great bulk of publicity be heaped into the mails. And there are fortunes in New York expended on ladies by friends and protectors who present them with jewels, furs, motor cars, apartments and even backing in Broadway stardom. Eight million francs, as everybody knows, would be a sum by no means unheard of in the list of these enamored donations.

But if among these lovely girls and attractive personalities one should be found who, instead of, or in addition to, her car and her picture in the magazine sections, wanted some great adventure in the art of the theater to be launched, with or without the braveries of her own ego, but with this lavish flight and aristocratic prodigality; or if some genius like Mr. Norman-Bel Geddes came down from his skies with an idea as superb as that for his Dante Model and looked for the thousands of dollars that it would cause to vanish—well, now, you see how that is: if you go and put your money on a thing that fails, it only shows that you were stung by the highbrow arty art; and if the public likes it and you don't go on with the show and never intended from the start to get your money back, it only shows you are not democratic. There is no chance that the richest country and the richest city in the world could afford adventures like this of Madame Ida Rubinstein's, daring and costly, and indifferent to the public market—we must respect ourselves.

STARK YOUNG.

Soviet Art and Handicrafts

THE current exposition of Russian arts and handicrafts at the Grand Central Palace, New York, is interesting, but not very impressive. Picking your way among wooden toys, nickeled samovars, commemorative china, Ukrainian embroideries, enamelled boxes, carved ivory, Caucasian and Turkoman rugs, you will find many beautiful objects and many singular ones, and a great many more that are rather commonplace. The collection of paintings, sculptures and the graphic arts is, as a whole, a little disappointing, exhibiting a wide variety, in quality and manner, which tends to hide the few really remarkable artists. Tucked away between pleasant impressions of the Russian landscape and curious though inept experiments, are a half-dozen extraordinary talents. The cream of the exposition, in both handicrafts and fine arts, could be shown in a very much smaller place.

It is a representative rather than a revolutionary show. The various objects are all for sale, and the note of propaganda has been studiously avoided. A quick turn around the place would do no more than hint at the gigantic struggle which stifled nearly all these endeavors and transformed them. There are no posters, and the Soviet posters are probably the best of their kind in the world. For several years many of the Soviet artists turned from their own personal work to the making of those startling, economical and often vigorously beautiful exhortations to defeat the White, kill the louse or drive out the priest. Now that Whites, lice and priests have been put in their places, Soviet artists, to judge from the samples here, have many of them gone back to dreamy, somewhat academic landscapes of the Volga or the village church cupolas gleaming through the snow. The battle is over, its hallucinated frenzy has given place to a productive calm in which artists are free to go their separate ways, in which the technicians of china are free to graft, upon the sound craftsmanship and tradition of an imperial factory, experiments which result in elaborate plates commemorating the All-Russian Union of Chemical Workers.

Among such products of native industry as wooden toys, pottery, rugs, embroidered linens and those red, green and gold lacquered bowls which, in such quantities as are shown in this exposition, quickly tire the eye, one can see few signs of the influence of the Revolution. Among the wooden toys, gaily painted dolls, animals and mushrooms, I could not find even one Red Army soldier with his characteristic red star and long-skirted overcoat. In chinaware, however, things have been happening, and you can see examples of pre-revolutionary atrophied perfection, far-reaching experiments, and all degrees of transition in between. Here are plates with hammers and sickles, red stars and telegraph wires, and greetings to the workers' International. Here are charming shaving mugs, with bright colors and stylized angular designs, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the power of the Soviets. Here is one of those human porcelain groups which used to encumber bourgeois mantelpieces, slightly transformed: a young boy with a red handkerchief is showing his bearded peasant father how to use the radio. The peasant wears a porcelain head-set over his ears. Here is a porcelain chess set, reds vs. whites. The white king is Death, the red king a worker, the white pawns are bound in chains, the red pawns are blond freedmen, with hammers and sickles. Here are statuettes of cross-legged, bare-breasted oriental beauties, reading tiny porcelain newspapers on which is written, "Workers of the world, unite."

Chief among these objects is a large vase, slate-blue, with heroic, dim, stylized figures, triumphant arches and an austere modern feeling beautifully adapted to an ancient art. Quite the most stunning object in the collection of breakables, and priced at $650.

Elsewhere you will find amazingly skillful ivory carving from the Yakuts and Koryats of the North, heavy, intricate and very expensive hand-enamelled silverware, gay fantastic postcards with poems beginning, "Kalinin, I love you" (Kalinin is the president and figure-head of the U. S. S. R.), and a number of objects which would feel at home only in the Tiffany Studios.

Most remarkable of all the handicrafts are the beautiful enamelled miniature boxes which are the traditional product of the village of Palekh, in the province of Nizhny-Novgorod. They are made nowhere else, and the man-power of the entire village is engaged in designing them or executing the designs of a few masters. Formerly the art of Palekh was directed to the painting of ikons, but since the Revolution the exquisite Byzantine charm of line and color has been adapted to more modern, sylvan and fantastic subjects. These little boxes are probably the loveliest things being made by unself-

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conscious artists anywhere in the world. That this ancient tradition should have survived, through war and revolution, in one small village, is a most singular and arresting fact.

A first glance at the hundred and forty paintings by Soviet artists surprises one by the variety of styles and by the number of traditions upon which the revolution in artistic ideas as well as in moral and social has had little or no effect. A large fraction of these paintings are in manner and ambition not very different from what could be seen at a widely representative show in almost any country. There is a good deal of sound, competent, picturesque but uninspired work. There are many impressionistic or realistic landscapes, cheerful, workmanlike, with a super-post-card charm, which one would expect from exiles, but hardly from citizens of the turmoil and experimental dissatisfaction of the U. S. S. R. There are the pleasant churches and river scenes of Konchalovsky, the Crimean glimpses of Kuprin. There are the hearty, apple-faced peasant types of Arkhipov, painted with a voracious literalness and profusion of accurate illustrative color.

Side by side with these are a number of naïve daubs by newcomers to oil and easel—daubs of Lenin, courageous, laborious landscapes, flat, sullen impressions of revolutionary policemen. The trial flights of artists who are still too far from technical skill even to be called experimenters.

Gradually, however, the canvases of several extraordinary and widely differing artists strike the eye. Sterenberg—the most competently modern of them all. His "Study in Yellow" and "Portrait in Blue" mark him as the equal of similar artists in almost any other country. Saryan (an Armenian), and his amazing, lighthearted "Ararat," easily the most interesting of the show's landscapes. A strident, fiercely energetic and distorted group of figures on revolutionary barricades by Kozlov—reminding one at once of Goya and George Bellows. Pimenov—gigantic striding figures, two men running, two girls at tennis, of singularly powerful ugliness. Kusnietzov's flat, neo-Biblical echoes of the East, Tatlin's strong sprawling nude, Bebutova's "Washerwomen," Goncharov's "Organ Grinder," the haphazard, exciting perspective of Labas' "Train from Moscow." And, most interesting of all, because in them one can see a new art and the Russian Revolution blended, the unforgettable dynamic awkwardness of the three canvases by Zernova—Red Army machine gunners lying on the snow, girls swinging in the air, a group of figures against the background of Archangel.

There are several women whose work is far superior to that of most of the men, stranger, more imaginative and more powerful. To Bebutova and Zernova must be added the extremely impressive heads, carved from solid blocks of wood, by Sandomirskaya. Her "Head of Man" and "Stenka Razin" are, as well as technically extraordinary, profound, inscrutable, imperishable.

I must leave a saner and more comparative discussion of the handful of original Soviet artists to the critics who possess all the fine shades of language whereby one -ism is distinguished from another. To a layman, lacking altogether in critical vocabulary, the best samples of Soviet art as shown in this collection are, as well as striking performances, promises that the many millions of Russians will, in less time than we think, produce great artists, the greater because they are surrounded by something which is calling so loudly to be expressed. The civilized countries of the West have been settling in layers, and art is one layer, distinct often from the rest of life and undisturbed by it. In Russia all the layers have been violently shaken together, and the excitement and necessities of a new order cannot fail to influence the younger artists profoundly.

When one considers the brief time that has passed since the time when no one in Russia could afford to think of anything but food and whether the Revolution would survive, when one counts the few years in which artists have been able to start thinking things out for themselves and doing their own work, this exposition is very encouraging. It should be continued year after year. The vermilion toys and the carved paper-cutters and the snowy landscapes will go on forever, but year after year, I am sure, we shall see new and strange artists, wearing the common stamp of an energy and independence and thirst for life, the sweaty, puzzled, raw-boned tumultuous life which makes ours seem so safe and so much less alive.

ROBERT LITTELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. Dewey and Mr. Woll

SIR: I was very much interested in the article appearing in the January 9 issue of your publication by Professor John Dewey, entitled "Labor Politics and Labor Education," as well as your editorial comment.

But it is not on that subject I intended writing at this time. Be assured that an answer will be forthcoming and that I need not be instructed or directed by your publication as to the nature of the answer warranted. I am writing you at this time to direct your attention to the footnote appearing in connection with Professor Dewey's article on page 212, which reads: "He [Mr. Woll] also uses the Life Insurance Company, of which he is President, to weaken the idea of state old-age pensions."

There can be no question that Professor Dewey refers to The Union Labor Life Insurance Company, of which I am the President. There can be no question either as to the intent or motive attributed to me by Professor Dewey in this statement. He clearly insinuates that I am using The Union Labor Life Insurance Company for an ulterior purpose. It is equally clear that Professor Dewey conveys and intended to convey the impression that I am using The Union Labor Life Insurance Company for a purpose foreign to its creation and outside of its legitimate scope and purpose. In other words, Professor Dewey attributed to me directly ill motives as President of that institution and at the same time stigmatized that institution as not operating for the purposes for which it was created.

It is of minor concern to me what Professor Dewey or your publication may say of me personally. I shall find time and occasion to answer both. I am concerned, however, as to his statement

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regarding an institution of which I am the President, and in the keeping of which have been placed the funds of over sixty national and international unions, of over thirty-five city central labor unions, seven state federations of labor and two hundred and forty local unions. In addition, The Union Labor Life Insurance Company carries life insurance for thousands of policy holders, all of whom have a right to be protected and whom I intend to protect even against statements issued by Professor Dewey and your publication. It is extremely unfortunate that Professor Dewey, without any acquaintance with me or with my activities, should allow his personal attitude toward me to lead him so far astray, and more lamentable that a publication like yours, that professes editorially so great a friendship for organized labor, should permit itself to become the medium for such libelous statements and endangering organized labor to the extent before indicated.

Quite aside from the legal considerations involved, might I ask if it is proper journalism to publish such statements as I have herein referred to? May I ask, too, if you have investigated the charge made by Professor Dewey that I have used The Union Labor Life Insurance Company to weaken the idea of state old-age pensions? I challenge both Professor Dewey and your publication to present any evidence to warrant such assertion. I will welcome the selection of any fair-minded and unbiased person, preferably a liberal judge of unimpeachable character, to consider any evidence of the validity of this charge. Are you willing to meet this issue in this fashion? If not, is it not then the honorable, right, and fair-minded thing to do to make fitting acknowledgment of the error committed, and at least remove the suspicion cast and harm done to an institution which ought not to be made to suffer because of any ill-conceived feelings Professor Dewey or your publication may entertain toward me?

I await your further answer and response.

MATTHEW WOLL.

Washington, D. C.

SIR: Mr. Woll has chosen to reply to an incidental point, which he has then played up in an irrelevant manner. That energy devoted to building up private insurance companies is diverted from working for state insurance, just as employers' pension schemes weaken public old-age pensions, is an obvious fact, and is the one to which attention is called in the sentence on which Mr. Woll builds such an elaborate structure. In no way is the Insurance Company of which he is President "stigmatized"; there is not the remotest insinuation that funds entrusted to it are not ably and honestly managed. I find it hard to believe that anyone other than Mr. Woll regarded the quoted sentence as insinuating anything of the kind. If there be such a person, I gladly assure him, and re-assure Mr. Woll, that there is nothing of the kind suggested.

JOHN DEWEY.

New York City.

A Conference on Power Control

SIR: Your activity in behalf of power control encourages us to request space in your columns for an announcement that the Chicago chapter of the League for Industrial Democracy will conduct a public conference on "Power Control," the week-end of March 2 and 3. The program will include addresses and discussion by Norman Thomas, Paul H. Douglas, representatives of the utility interests, and specialists in the field of public regulation and ownership.

Meetings will take place at 2 P. M. Saturday, March 2, and 10 A. M., Sunday, March 3, at the Woman's City Club, 360 North Michigan Avenue, where there will also be a dinner at 6:30 P. M., Saturday. The final meeting will be at the Adelphi Theater, at 3:15 P. M., Sunday, under the auspices of the Chicago Forum Council.

Inquiries should be addressed to the chapter's secretary, Miss Libbie Jacobson, at suite 1305, 123 West Madison Street, Chicago, (Randolph 4780).

CYNTHIA SMITH READE.

Chicago, Ill.

A Memorial for Paxton Hibben

SIR: On Sunday afternoon, February 3, Paxton Hibben was laid to rest in Moscow. On that same afternoon in New York, a group of his co-workers met to organize a committee to establish a Children's Hospital in memory of Captain Hibben and his work for the Russian children.

In 1922, shortly after his return from a tour of the famine area, Captain Hibben organized the American Committee for Relief of Russian Children. Despite the bitter attacks made by powerful organizations and individuals hostile to Russia, he raised, by his zeal, enthusiasm and devotion, in the first year enough to keep 50,000 children from starvation.

After the peak of the famine had passed, he turned to the task of caring for the famine orphans, millions of whom had been left homeless. A model hospital at Samara—a farm home in Terski Okrug—a home and workshop in Ryazan. Last November he was planning for a children's hospital. . . .

The Committee want this work to go on. Russia has put Paxton Hibben on its roll of honor. Let us honor him by carrying out his last plans for a children's hospital. Send your contributions (or any offer or suggestion of help) to the Paxton Hibben Memorial Hospital Fund, Room 1223, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

GREGORY STRAGNELL,
for the Memorial Committee.

New York City.

Was Aquinas Also a Modernist?

SIR: Mr. Summerfield Baldwin intervenes to defend the orthodoxy, presumably the Catholic orthodoxy, of Mr. Michael Williams' assertion that "the truth, the divine truth of the Catholic Church is unprovable in any ordinary sense of that word." To defend this assertion Mr. Baldwin quotes a very familiar sentence from St. Thomas, which has to do with the art of polemics, and then to my amazement confronts me with the question, "Was Aquinas *also* a Modernist?"

May I explain what the sentence from St. Thomas means? St. Thomas is considering the case of "putting over" proofs of the articles of Faith, when one is opposed by an intractable adversary who will not admit *any* divine revelation . . . in other words, who will not admit any presuppositions, whether reasonable or not. In such a case St. Thomas tells us to content ourselves with answering the adversary's objections against Faith . . . there is nothing else, indeed, to do! But the passage very clearly implies that St. Thomas held *that there are proofs* of the articles of Faith, even though they fail to convince everyone. In the eyes of the Church a proof is none the less valid though an unbeliever scoffs at it.

I fail to see what comfort or support Mr. Summerfield Baldwin can find for Mr. Williams in the *Summa*, which from its alpha to its omega is the antithesis of the subjectivism and emotionalism of "Catholicism and the modern mind."

E. BOYD BARRETT.

New York City.

H. G. Wells, Zoölogist

SIR: I am a little surprised at the comments made by T. S. Eliot on H. G. Wells in your Christmas Book Section. Mr. Eliot remarks that it is a pity Wells should suppose himself to be a biologist. It is surely general knowledge that H. G. Wells has a considerable knowledge of biology. He studied under the late Professor T. H. Huxley, and took his degree in science at the London University with first-class honors in zoölogy. This degree, incidentally, is considered to be of decidedly more value than similar degrees conferred by other universities, British or American.

Years ago, Mr. Wells wrote a textbook of zoölogy, and this, brought up-to-date, is still in use in schools; and there can be few other novelists who can more legitimately claim to have a knowledge of at least the fundamentals of this subject.

HUGH P. VOWLES.

Penarth, England.

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Nonsense

Useful Knowledge, by Gertrude Stein. New York: Payson and Clarke. 207 pages. $5.

GERTRUDE STEIN'S new volume called "Useful Knowledge" contains one of the most amusing of her nonsense pieces:

A Patriotic Leading

Verse I

Indeed indeed.
Can you see.
The stars
And regularly the precious treasure.
What do we love without measure.
We know.

Verse II

We suspect the second man.

Verse III

We are worthy of everything that happens.
You mean weddings.
Naturally I mean weddings.

Verse IV

And then we are.
Hail to the nation.

Verse V

Do you think we believe it.

Verse VI

It is that or bust.

Verse VII

We cannot bust.

Verse VIII

Thank you.

Verse IX

Thank you so much.

I have described this production as nonsense, and I have therefore no doubt led the reader to suppose that I regard it with contempt. To characterize something as nonsense is usually to throw it out of court as literature, and there are always a great many people who are ready to dispose of new and unconventional poets, playwrights or novelists in this way. Yet our ordinary use of the word "nonsense" in English, in connection with matters of literature, is based upon a complete misconception of the nature of literature, and of human expression itself.

"Nonsense" implies "sense"; and "sense" implies "reason," "rational demonstration," "logic." Yet literature depends on suggestion: it is not explicable by what we call "reason," or reducible to what we call "logic." A work of literature, if it is successful, must superinduce in the reader a whole set of thoughts, emotions and sensations—a state of consciousness, a state of mind. And the methods by which this is accomplished do not, by any means, meet the requirements of what is ordinarily called "sense," as distinguished from "nonsense." A work of literature depends for its effectiveness upon a web of associations as complex and, in the last analysis, as mysterious as our mind and body themselves.

That this is true in the case of poetry we are most easily persuaded to admit: admirers of "Ulalume" and "Kubla Khan" would find difficulty in discovering sufficient "sense" in them to account for the effect they produce. But we also have in English—something which does not exist in France, where they think more rigorously about these things—what is known as "nonsense" poetry: we have Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear. Yet the fact is, of course, that "Jabberwocky," "The Jumblies" and "The Owl and the Pussycat" do not differ in the least in kind from "Kubla Khan" and "Ulalume." And to confess this is not in the least to outlaw Coleridge and Poe from serious literature, but to admit Carroll and Lear as the remarkable poets they are.

There is also a kind of prose which is commonly recognized as close to poetry—this is often, precisely, the prose written by poets. I will take an example from W. B. Yeats:

> We make out of the quarrel with others, rhetoric, but of the quarrel with ourselves, poetry. Unlike the rhetoricians, who get a confident voice from remembering the crowd they have won or may win, we sing amid our uncertainty, and, smitten even in the presence of the most high beauty by the knowledge of our solitude, our rhythm shudders.

Here, "the presence of the most high beauty" and "our rhythm shudders" are not susceptible of being explained by anything which anyone who regarded, as many people have, Yeats's poetry as "nonsense" would be willing to accept as "sense." From the point of view of Yeats himself, there is a difference between this kind of prose and certain other kinds. In "A Vision," he writes as follows of the phase of human personality to which he assigns Bernard Shaw: "Style exists now but as a sign of work well done, a certain energy and precision of movement; in the artistic sense it is no longer possible, for the tension of the will is too great to allow of suggestion."

From Yeats's point of view, then, the prose of Bernard Shaw is devoid of suggestion, and, consequently, even of style. Let us examine a typical passage from "The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism," certainly Shaw's masterpiece of prose exposition:

> Naturally the squires were not disposed to take this defeat lying down. They revenged themselves by taking up Lord Shaftesbury's agitation for the Factory Acts, and showing that the employer's little finger was thicker than the country gentleman's loins; that the condition of the factory employees was worse than that of the slaves on the American and West Indian plantations; that the worst cottages of the worst landlords had at least fresher air than the overcrowded slums of the manufacturing towns; that if the employers did not care whether their "hands" were Church of England or Methodist, neither did they care whether they were Methodists or Atheists, because they had no God but Mammon; that if they did not persecute politically it was only because the hands had no votes; that they persecuted industrially as hard as they could by imprisoning Trade Unionists; and that the personal and often kindly relations be-

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> tween the peasantry and the landlords, the training in good manners and decent housekeeping traditions learnt by the women in domestic service in the country houses, the kindnesses shown to the old and sick on the great estates, were all lost in the squalor and misery, the brutality and blasphemy, the incestuous overcrowding, and the terrible dirt epidemics in the mining and factory populations where English life was what the employer's greed had made it.

If we examine this paragraph a little, we see that it depends as much on suggestion as the passage on rhetoric and poetry which has just been quoted from Yeats. Yeats suggests a state of mind where we are preoccupied with solitude and introspection, whereas Shaw suggests a state of mind where we are preoccupied with our relation to society; but that is the only difference. With Shaw, it is not really in the least anything describable as "facts" as differentiated from "images," "sense" as differentiated from "nonsense," which makes his statement effective: it is the hypnotic influence of such metaphors as "showing that the employer's little finger was thicker than the country gentleman's loins" and "because they had no God but Mammon"; it is the rousing rhythm of the piled-up indictment. The whole passage is loaded with suggestion from beginning to end: the suggestion of calling harsh names, the suggestion of violent antithesis, the suggestion of shifting quickly from a picture of horrible conditions to a picture of attractive ones and then abruptly shifting back to another more horrible still.

Let us, however, take another passage from a work which makes no claim to be literature, and in which the utmost effort has been exerted to get as far away from poetry, and to make sense as plainly, as possible—let us take a passage from the United States Courts-Martial Manual:

> The Army is an emergent arm of the public service which the Nation holds ready for a time of great peril. Military service is an obligation which every citizen owes to the government. It is settled law that such service may be compelled, if necessary, by draft. Nor is the obligation of the soldier who volunteers for a fixed period different from that of the drafted soldier. By his act of volunteering he consecrates himself to the military service. His engagement, supported by an oath of allegiance, is that the nation may depend upon him for such service during the fixed period, whatever may be the emergency. When this engagement is breached a high obligation to the nation is disregarded, a solemn oath of allegiance is violated, and the government is defrauded in the amount of its outlay incident to inducting the soldier into the military service, training, clothing, and caring for him while he remains in that service, and transporting him to the station from which he deserts. Desertion is thus seen to be, not simply a breach of contract for personal service, but a grave crime against the Government; in time of war perhaps the gravest that a soldier can commit, and at such times punishable with death.

It will be seen that the Courts-Martial Manual also has its metaphors: "The Army is an emergent arm of the public service"; and its cumulative rhythms: "When this engagement is breached a high obligation to the nation is disregarded, a solemn oath of allegiance is violated, and the government is defrauded," etc. The author of the Courts-Martial Manual is trying, like Bernard Shaw, to suggest a state of mind when we shall be conscious of ourselves only in our relation to society. Now let us turn back to Gertrude Stein. She is obviously attempting, in "A Patriotic Leading," to do just the opposite from the author of the Courts-Martial Manual: she is trying to superinduce a state of mind in which the idea of the Nation will seem silly, in which we shall be conscious of ourselves as something which does not lend itself to that conception. And the methods by which she accomplishes her ends are of precisely the same character: she proceeds by a kind of incantation. "The Army is an emergent arm of the public service which the Nation holds ready," etc. can be shown to be a piece of nonsense in just the way that Gertrude Stein can. The Army is not an emergent arm of anything: it is a collection of human beings. The difference between Gertrude Stein and the author of the Courts-Martial Manual is entirely a technical one: it is a difference simply of syntax and of the order in which each evokes his or her respective group of images.

What we have been dealing with here superficially is, of course, the problem of language itself—what our words actually signify, what happens when we communicate with each other. This is a problem which raises a great many other problems: it is a problem for philosophy, and a problem with which even philosophy can proceed only uncertainly and gropingly. The point is that, in our present uncertainty as to what we mean by "nonsense" and "sense," it is foolish to use "nonsense" loosely as a term of ridicule or contempt: the same thing applies to "balderdash" and "gibberish." These terms are invariably invoked against any mode of expression which seems new. But, in reality, there is only one mode of expression, and there has never been any other. The only question in connection with a work of literature is how much we enjoy the state of consciousness to which it gives rise. And in connection with this new book of Gertrude Stein's, I confess that I find most of it very tiresome. But if I had merely said that it was a book of nonsense, and left it at that, I should have created a misleading impression.

EDMUND WILSON.

Earth Pictures

The Book of Earths, by Edna Kenton. New York: William Morrow and Company. 290 pages. $6.

IN "The Book of Earths," Edna Kenton has made a collection of some hundred and fifty pictures which can hardly fail to prick the imagination of anyone who has ever paused—especially at night—to gaze out from this planet and wonder what it "really is like." Usually, we take the earth under our feet for granted; and all but prudent scientists assume that they already know what it is like: the scientists' speculations vary from century to century. Miss Kenton's book is unique in that it gathers together, for the first time, conceptions of the earth that have been held by many races and many civilizations.

But Miss Kenton has not confined herself to scientists: she has hospitably included every conception of the earth that she could find, from the crudest to the most elaborate. The reader will discover that practically every geometrical solid has, at one time or another, been drafted into service to represent this planet; it has been a sphere, a cube, a cone, a cylinder, a tetrahedron, an octahedron, an isocahedron, and so on. And, in the imaginations of myth-makers and metaphysicians, it has assumed an endless number of symbolic forms: an egg; a tree; a heart; a rose petal; a platter floating on the universal waters like a lotus on a pond; a ball supported by Atlas, or Quetzalcoatl; or a

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semi-sphere resting on the backs of four elephants, which in turn stand on the carapace of a tortoise. Miss Kenton has drawn impartially on Scandinavian Eddas, Egyptian, Babylonian, and Hindu traditions, legends of Peru, and the drawings of North American Indians. She closes her survey with the noncommittal guess of certain contemporary scientists that the earth is a "geoid," which is defined as a body having the shape of the earth.

The text of "The Book of Earths" is disappointing. As a series of notes for the illustrations, it is too discursive to be easily referred to; and as an interpretation of them, it merely provokes a tantalized feeling that all the most interesting things have been left unsaid. But the pictures themselves are undeniably fascinating.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS.

The Golden Cord

Troupers of the Gold Coast, or The Rise of Lotta Crabtree, by Constance Rourke. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 262 pages. $3.50.

IN the eighties a vivacious young actress—Minnie Maddern by name—won an instant small popularity because (so the press of the day reported) she so much resembled the piquant Lotta Crabtree. "We were all imitating delightful Lotta in those days," said Mrs. Fiske years later.

The stage career which had this enviable apogee in the eighties began in the flamboyant days of the gold rush, when Lotta, a smiling, red-headed hoyden of eight, was whisked on and off improvised stages in a hundred smoky bar-rooms of California mining camps by an industrious, determined, even prim New England mother. Most of her dance steps Lotta had picked up from Lola Montez, who had come to live in Grass Valley, trailing her wicked, adventurous past behind her like a flame-tipped golden cloud. Despite a natural puritan prejudice, the practical Mrs. Crabtree had been glad to have her child much in the talented Lola's company. For she had lost faith in her husband's indolent, gold-dazed dreams, took no pleasure in contemplating a future as a boarding-house keeper, and by some necromancy of maternal intuition, foresaw in small Lotta a career for them both.

So she left John Crabtree one fine morning and set forth to invest the only capital she had—her small daughter's talent. The venture succeeded. A rain of nuggets and packets of gold dust fell at the little girl's feet—presage of the extravagant gifts of jewelry lavished on "the incomparable Lotta" at Wallack's and Niblo's Garden a few years later.

From her first professional appearances a strange dichotomy was evident in Lotta. Once behind the footlights she swaggered and romped. But she had to be cajoled on to the stage by her mother; her gift of gaiety had to be nurtured and preserved by her mother; and as she grew older her time had to be protected by her mother from the interruptions of love or even intimate friendship. And meanwhile every grain of gold dust, every penny of that increasing income had to be swept up and shrewdly invested—by her mother. Thus was achieved an extraordinary career and a notable fortune. (Four million dollars it came to in the end.)

The Lotta who, behind the footlights, shook her short skirts naughtily, fell off sofas and showed far more than a decorous ankle, played gaily and brazenly in "Nan the Good for Nothing," and "Heartsease" and "Nell and the Marchioness," stamping her small foot angrily when the applause got out of hand, was ribald as only innocence can be. Off-stage she was Mary Ann Crabtree's good little girl—amiable and dull, "a charming [says Miss Rourke mildly] but not always interesting companion." In the pages of this detailed and entertaining story of her life, Lotta speaks scarcely at all. She is elusive, as a kitten is elusive. If her biographer had been able to coax her nearer, we should probably have found her made of an ingenuous softness and a purring, and a dainty indifference to everything but her saucer of cream. It is Mary Ann Crabtree who emerges a notable figure. She found in her daughter the outlet her tireless energies demanded. In Lotta she had a gold mine; she worked it profitably.

During the years after the triumphant close of her stage career in 1891, Lotta gave many parties, putting on old costumes and remembered roles. But it was her mother who was raconteur of their successes. And Lotta was inexpressibly lonely, apparently, after Mary Ann Crabtree died.

FLORENCE HAXTON.

Oh, La-La!

Orientale, by Francis de Miomandre. Translated by Ralph Roeder. New York: Brentano's. $2.50.

A Voyage to the Island of the Articoles, by André Maurois. Translated by David Garnett. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $1.50.

WHY the French are considered a gay people is beyond me. Surely they are among the most mournful of men: they have been civilized into resignation, and if they ever laugh heartily, it must be at the spectacle of non-Latin races attempting to find romance in a life which they themselves have known for centuries is a classic and quite determined affair. This larger fallacy of their national gaiety contains a smaller misconception: that all French novels are deliciously naughty. On the contrary (and I do not except even "Willy" from this sweeping charge), if you want to see a nation taking its pleasures sadly, read the French novels on love. Perhaps when enough of them have been translated, Americans will recover from their notion that modern French fiction is a Folies Bergères in printed form.

"Orientale" is an instance—more beautiful as an example than as a book—of this actually dreary attitude. Like the generality of French novels, it is well made; in fact, machined within an inch of its life. It is distinguishable from its thousands of fellow factory-products largely by reason of its new coat of paint and its 1929 license. A young bourgeoise wife, condemned to a dull domesticity, has become so bored that even the presence of a Chinaman, a "paying guest," has lost what little savor it once had. One day the Chinaman brings a friend to call, a rich banker from Canton. The banker and the bourgeoise fall in love. He must return to China, but he will come back; meanwhile he will write. Months pass—no word from him. She becomes the lover of the other Chinaman, who is supposed to be acting as their go-between, but in reality is intercepting his friend's letters. Finally the Chinaman deserts her, and then arrives the first letter from her beloved—a resigned but passionate farewell. Nothing in this neatly arranged little bandbox-tragedy-of-the-heart is improbable; it is all quite "true to life"; and signifies absolutely nothing.

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André Maurois' lightness is not an affair of the heart, but of the mind. He does not for a moment suppose that life is romantic, and he recognizes that, as artistic material, it is excessively unwieldy and gross, and must be cut almost to the bone. This he does with the utmost cheerfulness. His chief literary virtue, in fact, is this passion, (which is national, and classic) for simplification of form. "A Voyage to the Island of the Articoles" is a little book of pamphlet length, which describes, in the tradition of Swift and Butler, the paradise of artists. But, unlike Swift or Butler, there is no bitterness in Maurois' parable. His mockery is hardly mockery at all, but rather a pleasantly smiling comment on a microscopic society whose antics are amusingly unintelligent. There are no blood and tears in the walled garden of M. Maurois' world, for he is a member of a resigned race: the world must go its own dusty way to death, while art (it may be quietly inferred) attempts to keep us civilized, intelligent, and polite.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

West-Running Brook

Selected Poems, by Robert Frost. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 213 pages. $2.50.

West-Running Brook, by Robert Frost. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 64 pages. $2.50.

MR. FROST holds an eminent and enviable position in American poetry. He has the gift of stamping on nearly all he writes a personality that is valuable not only because it is felt as individual, but because it gives voice to many qualities we consider typically American. He has used, apparently naïvely, but actually with great care, that homely and partly frustrated eloquence which is usually associated with New England, to produce a number of poems either tragic or delightful, according to the mood that inspired them. Most of these poems—one misses one or two personal favorites—are included in the present selection of his work.

It is because of his previous accomplishment that one turns to Mr. Frost's new book with excitement, and at the same time feels justified in subjecting it to rigorous criticism. For it is on the whole disappointing. Not that it is without its successes; "Spring Pools" is a fine poem, so is "A Soldier," and lines such as the description of a tree,

> thing next most diffuse to cloud,

are awakening in a way that only Mr. Frost can manage. But there is an impression of thinness gained from this book which Mr. Frost has not given before. One feels that he has lost or abandoned a view of life which was, in its implications, tragic, and adopted instead an allegorizing method which is far less important. If, for example, one compares "The Death of the Hired Man" with "West-Running Brook"—the title poem of the present volume—one misses in the latter any sense of a present reality; Mr. Frost, instead of describing human emotions, points out the analogy between human life and the idiosyncrasies of a particular stream; objects unconnected except in the poet's mind. The point of view, in other words, is fanciful rather than imaginative.

It is this allegory-breeding intellectualization (the quality that makes Spenser only a minor master) which, reflected in many of the poems it contains, is chiefly responsible for turning Mr. Frost's book into a disappointment. It also

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helps to make such poems as "Lodged," "The Thatch," "Canis Major," seem unnecessarily trivial. And one wonders, as a result, if Mr. Frost has not already absorbed all that New England can give him (this book is much less local than the others); if his wooing of allegory, which is one of the easiest modes of thought, is not symptomatic of something more than a personal choice. Perhaps it is another and more damning characteristic of the type of American mind which he has already so admirably expressed.

THEODORE SPENCER.

Sociological Miscellany

SOCIAL theory is out of fashion. Those who do their thinking from a sociological point of view in America are, for the most part, engrossed in specialized, fractional problems. Thus the pendulum swings: at one time sociologists are scolded for their lack of special detail and their surplus of generalizations; whereupon they react so powerfully in the opposite direction that the capacity to generalize almost disappears. The two necessary aspects of a progressive science, namely, specialization and generalization, rarely coincide in point of time. Perhaps the reason for this lack of balance derives from the nature of the problems which confront the social scientist; his inquiry is so frequently determined, not by the permanence or universality of a problem, but rather by the attention which it receives in current affairs. Thus, it happens that there is at present an acute concern for the social institution known as the family; the notion is abroad that something of a pathological nature has happened to this ancient unit of civilization. Inquiry consequently goes backward historically and forward prophetically. Likewise, there is at present a more or less sharp recognition that the term "modern world" conveys a deep meaning; something in the old world has come to consummation, and there exists a vague feeling that we stand upon the threshold of a new culture. The new mind is in the making and we are curious to know why we behave like human beings. Mixed within this general *potpourri* of interests is the continuing concern of our local communities and the persistent query: Can the sociologists furnish trustworthy guidance? All of these points of attention are included in the nine volumes briefly noted below.

American Marriage and Family Relationships, by E. R. Groves and W. F. Ogburn. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 497 pages. $4.50.

This volume is distinguished by reason of its facts. Nineteen chapters are devoted to statistical analyses and conclusions. These chapters constitute the whole of the second part of the volume and represent a high degree of selection. In addition to the conventional facts regarding divorce, increase in marriage, etc., are chapters on Income and Marriage, Influence of City Life on Marriage, Widows and Widowers. In the theoretical section the most significant chapters deal with "The Psychology of the Woman Who Works," and "Marriage Norms." The authors suggest valuable methods for studying successful marriages.

The Family in the Making, by Mary Burt Messer. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 359 pages. $3.50.

Those who have so long relied upon Westermarck for historical reference with respect to the family will find

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in this volume something of fulfillment. The treatment is lively without sacrifices to scholarship; there are no distressing footnotes, and there is a point of view. (Unhappily, there is no index.)

America's Sex and Marriage Problems, by Dr. William J. Robinson. New York: Eugenics Publishing Company. 475 pages. $3.

Dr. Robinson is the sort of person who publishes fourteen of his titles on the jacket of his book and then adds an etc. He has written thirty volumes, mostly about sex. In this latest of his books, which is based upon two hundred so-called cases, he uses such phrases and words as the following: "You cannot sometimes always tell, brother skeptics." "Dreiser is one of my significant authors." Speaking of Anita Loos' "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," our author writes: "From one point of view, that is *per se,* the book is of no significance; but from another point of view it is quite significant, because it presents a pretty faithful picture of American life."

Living in the Twentieth Century, by Harry Elmer Barnes. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 381 pages. $3.50.

The subtitle of Professor Barnes' latest book is: "A Consideration of How We Got This Way." This subtitle gives a clue to the style of the volume; there is an obvious attempt to popularize sociology, or the sociological approach to history. It does not come off with complete success, but, like everything this versatile and prodigious author produces, it is interesting. The material is not new, save to those who have willfully determined to go on living in the eighteenth century.

Community Problems, by Arthur Evans Wood. New York: The Century Company. 589 pages. $3.75.

The Century Company goes to considerable trouble to furnish the reviewer with all of the essential facts regarding this book. Why they should do this, and then neglect to furnish an index for 589 pages, leaves this reviewer mystified. To resume, Professor Wood deals with the orthodox categories of community sociology. His theory indicating that many problems which have formerly been regarded as indigenous to the local community are gradually coming within the ægis of law should cause some of the community specialists to reëxamine their activities. The appendix on the philosophy of community organization is disappointing.

The American Community in Action, by Jesse F. Steiner. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 392 pages. $3.

Professor Steiner's students have observed their home communities in action. This volume is the fruit of their observations. It should be far more useful as a teaching tool than most of the conventional texts dealing with the local community and its problems. Professor Steiner's interest is in the community's processes, not its pathologies, and he has put together a number of telling cases. The communities observed are for the most part small and are located in fifteen states, ten of which are in the South. This means, obviously, that the larger urban community is not included, and it is here, of course, that one must search for the clues to future community behavior.

Elements of Rural Sociology, by Newell L. Sims. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 698 pages. $3.75.

Professor Sims views rural society in terms of four elements: the vital, cultural, material, and structural. Functional factors are interspersed and functional organization is considered as a part of structure. Although this volume was written as a college textbook, and is an excellent one, it will serve also to illuminate those who are completely baffled by the so-called agricultural situation and those who are inclined to see the situation only through economic lenses.

E. C. LINDEMAN.

He Saw It Himself

I Saw It Myself, by Henri Barbusse. New York: E. P. Dutton. $2.50.

"I SAW IT MYSELF" is an example of the inevitable failure of propaganda so bitterly pure that it differentiates only on the lines of its own bias. Here are gathered together some two dozen tales to illustrate the degradation of the soul of man under capitalism. Two innocent soldiers are murdered to maintain war-time morale; a regiment of Russians in France is slaughtered lest it return to fight for the Revolution at home; in Rumania men suffer awful tortures for the sin of Communism and in America a group of Indians is wiped out for the sake of oil land profits. The truth of the stories is vouched for by the author: in many cases real names are used. In a sense they are not only actually true, but typical, and yet—they do not convince. Only in a few cases do the tales manage to arouse wrath or horror. For the rest, they are too isolated, too far removed from the world in which we live. Here there are drawn two groups, that of the *evil* master class opposed to that of the *virtuous* working man. From the viewpoint of the Communist, at least, the division is a just one: in the larger sense he cannot exist without it. Yet it is also true that in the simple interrelations of individuals this sharp distinction fades: men, within the great urge of their groups, all tend to behave in a manner that appears to them excellent and virtuous. For Barbusse to have recognized this sympathetic truth would not have weakened the force of his propaganda: rather strengthened it.

M. P. L.

Contributors

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL, research director of the Foreign Policy Association, is the author of "The Labor Problem in Africa," "Present-Day Europe" and other books.

JOHN CROWE RANSOME is associate professor of English at Vanderbilt University.

GERTRUDE MATHEWS SHELBY is an expert on coöperative credit. She is the author of "Treason," "How to Face Peace," and, with James T. Dubois, of "Galusha A. Grow."

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS is a contributor of sketches, stories and reviews to various periodicals.

FLORENCE HAXTON was formerly a member of the staff of the New Republic and of the Dial.

THEODORE SPENCER is an instructor and tutor in English at Harvard University.

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